FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk September 24, 2017

East edition No 783

ENVIRONMENT

Diesel car ship blocked

Greenpeace campaigners force car container loaded with VWs to flee

POLITICS

Will he be the next Ukip leader?

We speak to candidate Henry Bolton ahead of party vote

FIRE

Community unites after huge blaze

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TRANSPORT

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Will Ukip survive to fight another election?

OF all the political parties, perhaps none divides opinion quite so strongly as Ukip.

Apparently capable of luring support from left and right of the political divide, it has always found something of a fertile ground in Kent. Or, at least, it did before the EU referendum result which it had been so successful in putting at the top of the political agenda. Unfortunately for it, the result also managed to prick its fragile bubble of success and sent it flying this way and that like a rapidly deflating balloon.

This week it is to unveil not only a new brand, but a new leader too. It will, surely, be a case of make or break for a party which in this county established itself as the second biggest player behind the seemingly ever dominant Conservatives.

In truth, it is hard to see how it can ever recover the ground it has lost in such dramatic style.

Even those who once extolled its virtues so publicly have opted to leap ship like the proverbial rats. Mark Reckless' ability to live up to his name by resigning his Tory seat in Rochester and Douglas Carswell's ill-fated stint as Ukip's one and only MP, must all look like rather misguided decisions today as they ponder the next step in their political careers.

The political landscape in recent years has become nigh on impossible to predict. From Trump to Brexit to Corbyn, it seems all previous rules no longer apply. And that, in truth, does make for a situation where we have all had to become more engaged. Which can surely be no bad thing.

Ukip knows it was the driver of Brexit and for that it will either be celebrated or castigated over the coming years. The big question for the purple party is whether it will be in any way relevant when we make that decision.

Editor **Chris Britcher**

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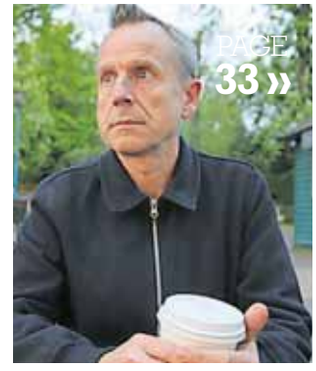

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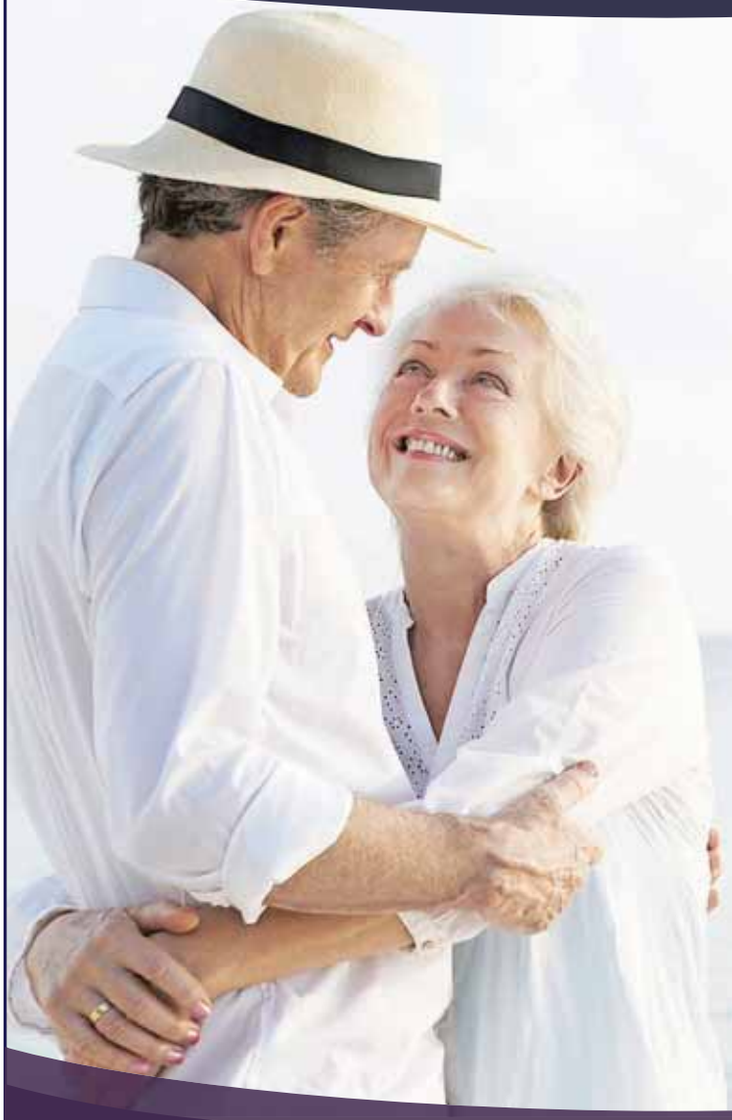

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Smash on M25 kills one and shuts road for hours

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

MOTORWAY: Anti-clockwise stretch was at a standstill for much of Friday morning

A recovery truck driver in his 50s was killed on the M25 on Friday in a major smash that left a huge chunk of the motorway closed for most of the day.

The entire anti-clockwise carriageway of the road was closed for more than six hours between junction 5 for the M26 and junction 4 for Orpington following the smash at around 6.15am.

Although there was a phased re-opening of lanes throughout the day, with all lanes re-opened by around 2pm, the huge backlog of traffic did not clear for several more hours.

It brought chaos to motorists using the road who found themselves stuck in non-moving traffic for several hours.

One told KoS: "I left my home in Maidstone at about 6.30am for a meeting in London at 9am, but spent two hours completely stuck before I was able to turn around and head home - meeting comfortably missed."

Police confirmed a green Scania articulated lorry smashed into the recovery truck driver and his white Iveco vehicle as it was attending to a broken down vehicle on the hard shoulder of the motorway.

The victim, from Chatham, was declared dead at the scene.

A spokesman for Kent Police explained: "He was not inside his vehicle at the time of the incident.

"Witnesses who have not yet spoken to police are urged to contact the serious collision investigation unit on 01622 798538 quoting reference DM/212/17."

A 42-year-old man from Gravesend was, at the time of going to press on Friday afternoon, in custody after being arrested on suspicion of causing death by careless driving.

The death follows a crash earlier this week in Wrotham in which a 24-year-old man was killed following a smash between a car and a lorry on Gravesend Road at around 1pm on Tuesday.

Named locally as Tom Greening, the victim was rushed to Darent Valley Hospital but died later of his injuries.

A police car was "in the vicinity" of the crash, Kent Police have confirmed, with a spokesperson adding: "The matter has been referred to the Independent Police Complains Commission, as is mandatory practice in such circumstances."

EU citizen fear of MP who warns hospital may be forced to close

THE QEQM Hospital in Margate would shut if EU citizens are forced to leave after Brexit, an MP has warned.

Sir Roger Gale fears the UK economy "would not survive" if the right measures are not put in place to permit not only skilled but "semi and unskilled labour" to enter the UK.

His colleagues around the county have also expressed fears on the impact of a bad Brexit deal, with Helen Whately concerned that farms in her constituency of Faversham and Mid Kent would go out of business without access to seasonal labour.

Speaking in a Commons debate on the rights of UK nationals in the EU, the Thanet North MP said: "I am acutely aware of the importance of the EU nationals employed in my constituency.

"If the EU citizens among the ancillary staff in the QEQM hospital – never mind the highly qualified consultants and others – were to leave, the hospital would shut.

"If we removed the equivalent staff from local care homes they would shut.

"If the Lithuanian bakers from Speciality Breads, an award-winning local company, were to leave, that business would have great difficulty finding replacements for them.

"The largest greenhouse complex in Europe [Thanet Earth] is in my constituency. They grow tomatoes hydroponically.

"Those tomatoes are harvested largely by Poles and Romanians. Why? Because despite my requests and the company's best endeavours they cannot recruit British labour to do the job, not because of costs but because it is hard work and there are not enough people willing to do it.

"There are necessary people – not merely the highly qualified and the skilled but the semi-skilled and the unskilled – from the EU and beyond who work, live, enjoy life and pay taxes in this country and without most of those people the UK economy would not survive."

Teen charged over Parsons Green tube terror attack

THE 18-year-old man arrested at the Port of Dover last weekend has been charged in connection with the Parsons Green tube train terrorist attack.

Ahmed Hassan, from Sunbury in Surrey, was arrested at 7.50am last Saturday at the Kent port.

It came just hours after a device exploded on a train in west London last Friday.

He has been charged with attempting to murder persons travelling on a District Line train from Wimbledon, contrary to section 1(1) Criminal Attempts Act 1981 and maliciously caused by triacetone triperoxide (TATP) or other explosive substance an explosion of a nature likely to endanger life or to cause serious injury to property.

Tory council leader to retire after 14 years at the helm

PAUL Watkins will retire as leader of Dover District Council and step down as a ward councillor at the end of next week.

The Conservative councillor has led the local authority since 2003, making him one of the longest serving council leaders in the county.

He first joined the town hall as a ward councillor for Lower Walmer in 1983 and since 1999 has represented St Margaret's-at-Cliffe.

He also served as chairman of the council from 1989 to 1992.

Cllr Watkins said: "Now is the right time to pass the baton on to someone new to lead the council into its next phase, including an Electoral Commission review of the number of elected members, and the local elections in 2019."

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County town's local plan approval postponed

A CRUNCH meeting where council chiefs were set to rubber-stamp a controversial document which sets out Maidstone's development over the next 15 years has been postponed after MPs voiced concerns.

The borough council's leader, Fran Wilson, and chief executive, Alison Broom, met with Helen Whately on Tuesday after the Faversham and Mid Kent MP urged communities secretary Sajid Javid to delay the formal adoption of the plan ahead of a planned full council meeting on September 27.

Mrs Whately wrote to the minister, supported by neighbouring MP Helen Grant, fearing the local authority's proposals would create ''lasting damage to villages and countryside'' around the county town.

Student found dead just 24 hours after arriving for uni's freshers' week

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AN INVESTIGATION has been launched after the death of a student during freshers' week at the University of Kent.

It is believed the 18-year-old woman was spending her first night in the halls of residence at the Canterbury campus when she died.

Police say they are not treating the death as suspicious and that her family have been informed.

A coroner's inquiry will now take place to determine the cause of her death. Her body was discovered last Sunday morning, less than 24 hours after she arrived on campus.

A spokesman for the university said: "We can confirm the death of a female first year student at our Canterbury campus on September 17.

"Police are not treating the death as suspicious. Next of kin have been informed and support is available for students and staff. Our thoughts are with the family at this difficult time."

PROBE: University of Kent

Molly Hope, culture editor of the university's student newspaper, InQuire, was working as a welcome helper.

She explained: "We were moving everyone in, it was a really positive and happy experience on Saturday. We arrived Sunday morning to continue helping students moving in but there were ambulances and police cars outside of Tyler Court.

"We were informed that there had been an incident and access to the flat in question was blocked off. We were told to move aside as the ambulance crew left the premises. Shaken students started coming out of their rooms and we had to calm them down. It was a sombre morning given how excited students usually are when they start their time at uni."

A spokesman for Kent Police said: "We were called at 8.37am on Sunday to residential accommodation on the University of Kent campus, Canterbury, following a report a person had died.

"Officers and the South East Coast Ambulance Service attended the scene where a woman in her late teens was confirmed dead.

"Her death is not being treated as suspicious. "Next of kin are aware and a report will now be prepared for the coroner."

GUILTY: James Clarke

Killer is jailed for setting fire to his own flat

AN 80-year-old released from prison after being convicted of murder is back behind bars after being sent down for three years for starting a fire at his home in Maidstone.

Pensioner James Clarke caused tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage when he started the fire on the bed of his third floor flat in James Whatman Way on April 30.

When the alarm was raised, Clarke told emergency crews he had deliberately caused the fire.

Clarke was immediately recalled to prison, having breached a life licence imposed following a previous conviction in 1990 for murder.

Appearing before Maidstone Crown Court, he admitted a charge of arson being reckless as to whether life was endangered. He was sentenced this week to three years and four months.

Detective sergeant Neil Martin said: "The building in which Clarke lived also housed a large number of sheltered accommodation residents, mainly elderly and vulnerable people. They all had to be evacuated and Clarke's incredibly reckless actions put their lives at risk, as well as his own.

"Although no one was injured, Clarke presents a significant risk of causing serious harm."

Labour youth officer in pro-North Korea row

YOUTH officer of the Canterbury Constituency Labour Party has caused a stir on Twitter by claiming she'd ''rather have solidarity with North Korea than the USA''.

Sarah Cundy, 18, who is also chair of Canterbury Momentum, the grassroots Jeremy Corbyn-supporting campaign, made the statement in an exchange of tweets with a politics blogger.

The Simon Langton Grammar student, who has since apologised for the comments, had been criticised for displaying the North Korean flag in her Twitter biography - a reference she has subsequently removed.

In a series of posts, Miss Cundy said: ''I have solidarity with countries willing to stand up to imperialism. I do not endorse their strikes over Japan but three million Korean people were killed in the Korean War by America, I'd rather have solidarity with DPRK than the USA.''

Labour MP for Canterbury Rosie Duffield declined to comment.

Decision day looms for M20 junction 10a

A DECISION on plans for a new junction on the M20 in Ashford is due within weeks.

Proposals for junction 10a, just 700m east of the existing junction 10, went out to consultation last year, and have been in the pipeline for around a decade.

It is designed to help relieve the strain on the current junction and serve the major new developments - both residential and commercial - being created around the town.

It will use two bridges and connect to the existing A20 and a new dual carriageway link road built to the A2070 near Sevington.

Now the planning inspectorate - the government office which deals with all major infrastructure planning applications - has issued a report of recommendation to transport secretary Chris Grayling, who has until December 1 to decide whether to give the project the green light.

Highways bosses then aim to begin work in January, with an estimated completion date of May 2020.

£3.2bn resort agrees clipper service route

A DEAL to provide direct river bus services to the proposed entertainment resort on the Swanscombe Peninsula has been struck.

London Resort Company Holdings, the developers behind the planned £3.2bn theme park, has reached a memorandum of understanding with MBNA Thames Clippers, which recently successfully trialled a service from Gravesend into the capital.

Bosses anticipate up to 10 per cent of the anticipated 15 million annual visitors will make use of the fast ferries.

Details of the services will be finalised closer to the opening of the resort - currently scheduled for 2023 - but include linking the resort with Tilbury and Grays to south of the river and central London, with an opportunity for MBNA Thames Clippers to deliver a 'park and ferry' service from Tilbury docks.

Humphrey Percy, CEO of LRCH, said: ''This is a crucial part of our strategy to make as much use of the Thames as we can in order to provide access to the London Resort away from local roads.''

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Police chief hints force could work with paedophile hunters

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE UK's lead police officer on child protection has said forces will "potentially" have to look at working with so-called paedophile hunters.

Senior officers have previously said vigilante groups such as The Hunted One, which operates across Kent and south east London, could put child abuse investigations at risk.

But figures obtained by the BBC show an increase in the number of cases where evidence gathered by paedophile hunters is being used.

More than 44 per cent (114 of 259) cases of the crime of meeting a child following sexual grooming used this evidence in 2016, compared to 20 out of 176 cases in 2014 (11.3 per cent).

Chief constable Simon Bailey, the national lead for child protection at the National Police Chiefs' Council, told the BBC: "These vigilante groups are putting the lives of children at risk.

"I'm not going to condone these groups and I would encourage them all to stop, but I recognise that I am not winning that conversation. I think working with vigilantes is something we're going to have to potentially have to look at, yes, but it comes with some real complexity."

LURE: Those seeking children for sexual gratification are often trapped online

A sting operation by a group known as The Hunted One descended into violence as they ambushed a man who sent sexual messages to a decoy account.

Their target, Mirza Beg, 29, was jailed at Maidstone Crown Court in August for 40 months after he turned up with condoms at the Bluewater Shopping Centre in Greenhithe, near Dartford, believing he was meeting a 14-year-old girl.

Mr Bailey warned that paedophile hunters' activities could hamper existing police operations.

"I don't encourage or condone the activities of these paedophile hunters, because we only ever hear of the cases where they believe it has gone well.

"They don't take into consideration the safeguarding risks to children, the implications of a failed operation or the compromise of one of our own operations.

"So I don't believe that vigilantes are the answer to this problem."

Britain First leaders face court hearing

BRITAIN First leader and deputy leader Paul Golding and Jayda Fransen will appear before Medway magistrates on October 17 charged with regliously aggravated harassment.

They were arrested in May as police investigated leaflets handed out around Thanet and Canterbury and a video posted online during the trial of four men who were later found guilty of rape. Both have been bailed.

Finalist in seafood restaurant awards

ROCKSALT in Folkestone is on the shortlist to be named Seafood Restaurant of the Year.

It must now hope to impress the judges as they cast their critical eye over the final finalists in the contest organised by seafood industry champion Seafish and industry magazine The Caterer.

The winner will be announced next month.

Garden city's 700th

THE 700th home at Ebbsfleet Garden City has been completed.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation interim chief executive Paul Spooner said: ''There has been a remarkable step change with seven major housebuilders now on site and hundreds of new completions being achieved.''

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Theatre hikes security levels after Parsons Green attack

BOSSES at Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre have urged visitors to be extra vigilant in the wake of the recent terror attack at Parsons Green.

Following the explosion on the tube last Friday, the threat level was temporarily raised from 'severe' to 'critical' and the theatre announced it was introducing additional security measures.

The threat level has subsequently been reduced but the Marlowe has reassured visitors that robust arrangements remain in place.

General manger Paula Gillespie said: "We have developed our theatre's security policies in accordance with the advice given to managers of public spaces by Kent Police and the National Counter Terrorism Office (NCTO).

These policies are regularly reviewed by our management team.

"Our staff are trained to monitor and report suspicious activity and in the operational procedures we've been advised to put in place to ensure the safety of our audiences.

"We ask our audiences to report any suspicious activity and ensure that they keep their personal belongings with them at all times."

Thanet could lose 20 of its councillors in shake-up

SOME 20 councillor jobs in Thanet could be axed under new proposals.

The district council's boundary and electoral arrangements working party meets next week to discuss the plans to reduce the number of councillors from 56 to 36.

It comes after plans to create a single district council across east Kent - including Canterbury, Dover and Shepway - were scrapped back in March.

Both Canterbury and Shepway have since undertaken electoral reviews to reduce the number of councillors and Dover has also signed up to one.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) undertake these reviews on behalf of councils to ensure that there is an equality of democratic representation across the area that council represents.

A report issued to councillors says: "The changes as a result of an electoral review are generally implemented at the next set of elections, as the review takes approximately a year to complete these would be the May 2019 elections.

"We have been informally advised by the LGBCE that to start any later than now and it would not be possible to complete the review prior to May 2019 and so any changes required would then most likely not be implemented until May 2023."

After scrutiny at next Wednesday's meeting, the report will then be considered by the full council at its meeting on October 12.

Duo on prison charge

TWO men will appear before court next month after being charged with a conspiracy to throw drugs and mobile phones over a wall and into a Maidstone prison.

They were arrested after plain clothes officers reported suspicious behaviour in County Road. They'll appear on October 20.

Civic centre plans talk

ANYONE wanting to know more about the proposed development of the civic centre in Tunbridge Wells can discuss the issue with council staff this week.

A drop-in event will take place in the cafe at the Calverly Grounds on Thursday from 10.30am to noon.

Pets killed in cattery fire

SEVEN cats and a dog were killed after a fire broke out in a cattery in the early hours of Saturday morning.

Emergency crews were called to the scene in Corporation Street, Rochester, just before 4am. No one else is believed to have been injured.

'Money mules' warning

YOUNG people are being warned to resist temptation and avoid becoming illegal 'money mules' if offered large amounts of cash from strangers.

Police are keen to ensure people do not unwittingly become complicit in money-laundering offences.

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'Lives are being put at risk'

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

EMERGENCY crews were once again counting the cost and warning of a loss of life, after crooks broke into seven ambulances in Thanet and stole life-saving defibrillators.

All ambulances were targeted overnight last Sunday while they were parked at Thanet Ambulance Station in Haine Road, Ramsgate.

It is just the latest in a string of crimes across Kent and the south east where crooks have saved the devices which can kick-start the heart after a medical emergency.

Detective sergeant Simon Harrold said officers were pursuing a number of lines of enquiry.

He said: "It appears that the thieves levered the back doors of the ambulances open to gain access to the defibrillators.

"Thefts like this put lives at risk because these ambulances cannot operate fully and provide an emergency service without these vital pieces of equipment."

Detectives believe the offenders would have needed a vehicle to transport the defibrillators as they are bulky items weighing around 10 kilos each.

Det sgt Harrold added: "We are urging anyone with information about the thefts, or who saw suspicious activity in the area on Sunday night, to contact us.

"We would also like to hear from anyone who has seen or been offered second-hand defibrillators for sale."

Thefts of defibrillators are on the rise across the country because they have a high resale value.

Det sgt Harrold added: "We urge organisations looking for second-hand defibrillators to always ask for the serial numbers first so they can check they are legitimate."

SECAmb operating unit manager for Thanet, Giovanni Mazza, said: "Following on from other thefts across our region in recent months, lives have once again been put at risk by this disgraceful act targeting vital life-saving equipment. We are working closely with police following the theft from Thanet and would urge anyone with any information whatsoever to come forward."

Anyone with information about the thefts is asked to phone Kent Police on 01843 222289 or Kent Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111 quoting reference number 18-0166.

RAIDED: Seven ambulances were targeted after being parked in Ramsgate last weekend

Court date set for Molly case

THE man accused of killing a University of Kent student in a shopping centre car park appeared in court on Monday.

Molly McLaren, 23, was stabbed to death outside Dockside Shopping Centre in Chatham in June.

Joshua Stimpson, 25, and of High Street in Wouldham, Rochester, was charged with her murder the day after the attack and will next appear on December 1.

Hundreds of people attended the colourful funeral of Miss McLaren, from Cobham, at Gravesend Crematorium last month.

Crooks steal war medals

A NUMBER of medals from the First World War were among items stolen in a burglary in Parkwood Close, Tunbridge Wells last weekend.

The two missing medals had 'Pte AJ Benham' and 'G/95374 Middlesex Regiment' inscribed on them.

Detective constable Jerry Chapman said: "I am very keen to track down the person responsible but also to reunite the victim with the medals earned by her late grandfather."

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MISSION: Protestors targeted the vessel as it attempted to dock at Sheerness, forcing it out while they raised awareness of their environmental fears. Picture: KRISTIAN BUUS/GREENPEACE

Greenpeace target VW car ship as it tries to deliver to Sheerness

Luke May on the dramatic events in the Thames Estuary this week as part of diesel vehicles protest

ENVIRONMENTAL activists slammed the brakes on a 23,000-tonne car carrier heading to docks on Sheppey this week as part of a major protest over emissions.

Greenpeace targeted the cargo ship which was heading to Sheerness to deposit hundreds of vehicles by German manufacturer Volkswagen (VW).

The firm ignited the ire of environment groups two years ago when it was found to have fitted software to its diesel cars to allow them to pass stringent emission tests.

It is thought they were applied to some 11 million vehicles worldwide - including 1.2 million in the UK.

A team from Greenpeace, using kayaks and boats, reached the vessel in the Thames Estuary at about 8.30am on Thursday.

They climbed on board and were hanging from the ship's 27m-high unloading door, pledging to remain until Volkswagen "takes its toxic cars back to Germany".

While on the door they unfurled a huge banner which read 'ditch diesel'.

The ship was eventually forced to turn around and sailed to Margate where it anchored overnight and into Friday with the Greenpeace campaigners still on board.

VW insist the ship was primarily carrying petrol models, along with nearly 40 plug-in hybrid electric cars.

HIT: The poster draped off the back of the boat as it sailed down estuary

Meanwhile, at the same time, a number of activists used ladders to gain access to the secure car storage area at Sheerness port where thousands of VWs are kept before they are distributed to UK suppliers.

They were attempting to immobilise the diesel models by removing the keys and were labelling engines with messages calling on them to cut emissions and consider the impact on the environment.

Two protestors stayed overnight.

Areeba Hamid, clean air campaigner at Greenpeace, said: "Two of our climbers have been arrested after blocking this VW toxic cargo for hours, but another team immobilised thousands of VW diesels at the port. Our volunteers have stepped in and put their freedom on the line to do what our government and regulators have failed to do – protect our health from toxic pollution.

"We will keep putting pressure on VW until it takes responsibility for its role in our air pollution crisis and ditches dirty diesel for good."

One of the activists, support worker Janet Barker, 38, from Powys, said: "Diesel cars are toxic, so we're here to block VW imports on behalf of all of the children who are the most acutely affected by the health impacts of diesel fumes.

"VW's polluting vehicles are adding to a public health emergency harming thousands of people."

Volkswagen issued a statement saying the diesel cars on the ship meet the latest air pollution regulations.

It read: "The ship contains a variety of Volkswagen Group vehicles, including petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid models. The diesel vehicles, which are the subject of the protest, meet strict Euro-6 standards."

The government announced in July that new diesel and petrol cars and vans will be banned from 2040 as part of efforts to tackle air pollution.

PARKED: Keys of cars found in secure parking unit at the port which protestors removed on Thursday. Picture: JIRI REZAC/GREENPEACE

A spokesperson from Peel Ports, which runs the site, said: "We can confirm that Greenpeace protesters have illegally entered secure areas of the Port of Sheerness. These areas are restricted to ensure that UK border security is preserved and we protect the safety of our customers and employees working on the port. We are working with the police, Greenpeace and Volkswagen to resolve the situation. The safety of the protesters and employees, whilst safeguarding the marine environment, remains our principal priority."

It is not the first time Greenpeace has been active in the county. Ten years ago campaigners climbed up the power station at Kingsnorth as part of a high profile protest against the building of coal-fired power stations in Hoo.

Ribbon cut as the £70m A21 dualling is completed

Some thought they'd never see the day, but finally one of the most notoriously busy roads in Kent has been expanded

By Chris Murphy
editorial@archant.co.uk

IT had been discussed for years but on Thursday the upgraded A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury was finally fully re-opened - albeit some nine months behind schedule.

One of the county's most notorious traffic blackspots, it is hoped the dualling of the stretch will enhance the journey times of some 35,000 motorists who use the road every day.

The road is one of the main arteries into Tunbridge Wells, and it was thanks to relentless pressure from politicians in the town and from County Hall which finally saw the government give the go-ahead to the £69.7 million project.

It had initially been shelved after the coalition government's spending review in 2010 before being adopted once again three years later.

It is hoped it will help speed up journeys, improve safety, reduce congestion and boost the economy with businesses previously complaining of losing thousands of pounds in delays as a consequence of the jams that built up there day and night.

Highways England regional investment programme director David Haimes said: "This is another missing link in the country's road network filled in.

"For decades, the single carriageway section of the A21 between Tonbridge and Pembury has been a source of daily congestion, delaying drivers and frustrating business who depend on the road. That changes now."

SNIP: Tonbridge MP Tom Tugendhat joined children and VIPs to officially open the road on Thursday afternoon

Sections of the road may still close for short periods over the coming months as final work on issues such as landscaping an the construction of the Blackhurst Lane footbridge is completed.

Two new junctions have been built as part of the project, plus dedicated new facilities for pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists.

Cutting the ribbon was Tonbridge MP Tom Tugendhat. He said: "For decades this road has suffered from severe congestion and the new route should mean that such frequent delays are a thing of the past.

"This has been a major project, with work taking over three years, but I am delighted that it is now complete. This is an important project in achieving greater connections between our communities and I'm thankful to all the residents in local towns and villages who have had to deal with the impact during construction.

"I was pleased to be joined by representatives from Highways England, Balfour Beatty, Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils. This would not have happened without them."

However, the project has not been without its controversy, with an area of ancient woodland having to be destroyed to create the space for the additional lanes.

Highways chiefs said the area would be relocated, but that has not sat well with those opposed to it.

Oliver Newham is from the Woodland Trust. He explained: "Whilst we recognise the need for improvements to the road infrastructure there's no getting away from the loss of nine hectares of irreplaceable ancient woodland.

"Highways England claims the works are a positive example of 'translocation' of ancient woodland soil, a measure for which there is no evidence of success.

"It's vitally important that future traffic solutions in Kent work in harmony with the natural environment, not against it. Tunnelling, junction improvements, public transport investment and road realignment must be prioritised over a build first, think later outcome.

"Studies show the woods contained more than 1,000 species of fungi, 10 species of ladybird, 24 species of bee and at least 13 species of butterfly.

"We all need to remember ancient woodland is rare, precious and really is irreplaceable.

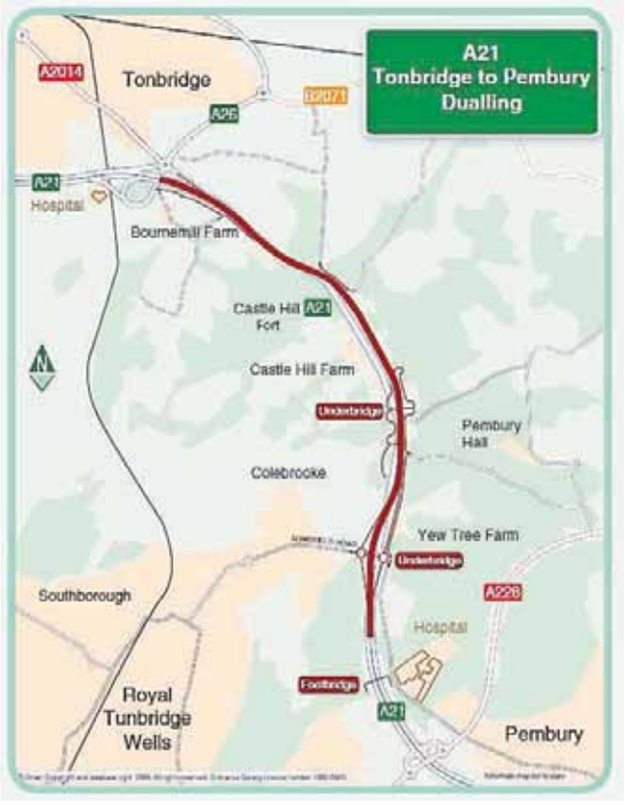
"Its intrinsic value to the natural environment is something upon which no price can be levied."

Highways England said the project team had taken great care to protect the nearby environment and that some 18 hectares of new woodland was created, double what was actually needed for construction, using cutting-edge translocation techniques, to preserve its ecological make up.

They added that new areas of heathland have also been created and an ancient barn carefully taken down to be reconstructed and preserved at a heritage museum.

As well as improving the road, a new path along the A21 has been completed. Kent County Council will provide additional links to Tonbridge railway station and the Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury.

The building work had started in the spring of 2015, and has been gradually opened in phases for use by drivers in the past few months. That started with a new flyover at Longfield Road in July. The road layout has also been improved for properties along the A21 with a new junction to provide safer access.



ROUTE: The section of the road which has been upgraded

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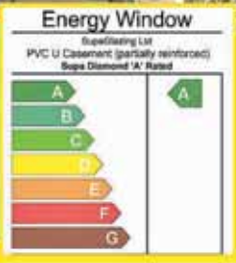

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Is Bolton the man with a plan for Ukip's revitalisation?

Ukip has been on a rollercoaster ride in recent years with incredible highs but now finds itself in a low. We speak to one of the candidates who is hoping to be crowned leader when the party unveils its new look at its annual conference

By Tom Pyman
Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

UKIP has "a moral duty" to deliver a successful Brexit, the Kent man vying to become the party's new leader has claimed.

Bookmakers have rapidly slashed odds on Henry Bolton being elected the new head of Ukip at the party's annual conference in Torquay next week.

A former police officer and security expert, Mr Bolton currently lives in Folkestone, and stood in last year's Kent police and crime commissioner election, finishing second behind Matthew Scott of the Conservatives.

However, it has been a turbulent 15 months for Ukip following the vote to leave the European Union last June - with tales of defections, infighting, crushing election losses and something of an identity crisis which leaves many wondering what exactly is the point of its continued existence.

In Kent it has enjoyed success in recent years, claiming control of its first ever council in Thanet back in 2015, and becoming the main party of opposition on Kent County Council two years earlier - though its representation at County Hall was completely wiped out when voters returned to the polls in May.

The county has of course also been home to one Nigel Farage, who, for now at least, will not be returning as the face of the party.

Speaking to KoS as his leadership campaign slowly begins to wind down, Mr Bolton, who is currently fourth-favourite with the bookies, was confident he was the best person to make Ukip relevant again.

"I don't think anybody outside the party will be putting money on me because I don't have as much of a political following outside the party as some of the other candidates," he said.

"I think I'm going to do better than fourth.

"If you look at John Rees-Evans and Anne Marie Waters, they have got a massive online presence which has been established over time that is way in excess of membership numbers.

"But a lot of their following is not members – from our analysis of the supportive comments for Anne Marie Waters, only six per cent are from members, which brings her right down.

"I've been to hustings where the person chairing it said 'I am supporting you and so is everybody else' and they burst out in applause – there's a huge amount of support."

Mr Bolton's CV is virtually bulging at the seams, having previously worked alongside the United Nations and the White House, and claims his vast breadth of experience gives him a headstart over his rivals.

"None of the others have got the experience of leading in terms of motivating, driving the support of an organisation and none have the organisational leadership that I've got," he said.

"Some of my opponents say that they are the only ones who will truly change the party.

"Anne Marie Waters says she will 'tell the truth about Islam' and John Rees-Evans will bring direct democracy [where members vote on policy initiatives].

"These are niche but revolutionary ideas. But does the party want to go down either route? I don't think so.

"They are making themselves different but I am saying we should focus on delivering the things we always wanted to – namely a successful Brexit.

"We have dropped the ball on that and we need to pick it up again. Ukip went to radio silence, the general election was a bit of a car crash campaign and since then we have done just about nothing.

"Someone asked me how I was going to deal with the fact the media aren't reporting on us, but have we done anything? We have gone quiet.

"We have got a government that is compromising Brexit already.

"We have seen it in proposals for defence co-operation, it seems increasingly likely that there is going to be a significant payment to the EU, there's a question mark over fisheries – there are all sorts of areas in which we may end up with a bit of a fudged Brexit.

"Then we had the discussions over the withdrawal bill last week – Ukip should be all over that, it's a crucial piece of legislation."

Of course, some would argue just how much of an influence the party can have without any parliamentary representation whatsoever.

Needless to say dad-of-three Mr Bolton, whose wife famously gave birth to daughter Victoria on a high-speed Southeastern train last year, disagrees with those claims.

He said: "We brought about the referendum with next-to-no MPs. Influence is power, it's not all about bums on green seats in Westminster.

CHANGE: Henry Bolton, left, is hoping to follow in Nigel Farage's footsteps. But did not rate Chris Wells', pictured to right of Mr Farage above, leadership of the party's only district council in Thanet. Picture above: ADY KERRY

"Everybody has acknowledged we are leaving the customs union – Michel Barnier, Jean Claude Juncker, Theresa May, David Davis, even Jeremy Corbyn and Keir Starmer – so why are we still moving ahead with 32 per cent cuts in the border force?

"Leaving the customs union implies we will have to do more work on our borders. There's a real lack of strategic overview and thinking going on – we have failed to plan and prepare.

"We need to be shouting loud and clear that the government is missing something here. We have a moral responsibility to make sure Brexit is a success for everybody."

In order to get itself crucial votes once again, Ukip is undergoing something of a rebrand, which will be unveiled next week.

It is understood the purple colours will remain, but the logo may change, while Mr Bolton also hopes to change wider perception of the party.

Ms Waters has proved a controversial figure for her public criticism of Islam, and her inclusion on the ballot paper has prompted warnings that she could split the party, with 18 of the 20 Ukip MEPs reported to be ready to quit if she wins.

Speaking of his opponent, Mr Bolton said: "Anne Marie Waters is a passionate and highly effective campaigner, but if you want to deliver anything you have to be credible.

"If Ukip goes down the route of being anti-Islam, it won't be able to deliver on Brexit.

"She doesn't provide solutions. If she were to totally 'get it', that you need to have more political acumen if you are going to make progress, she could be highly effective in the future.

"There are Muslims who have laid down their lives for this country and Muslims who are passionate believers in Britain – to paint them all with the same brush is absolutely unfair, unhelpful and unproductive.

"But the issues she raises are not irrelevant –

Continued on page 16

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Continued from page 15

we face a risk of jihadi Islam and a threat to our way of life by the sheer weight of numbers that come in from foreign culture and it's our fault for failing to manage it."

Kent's association with Ukip has been strong in recent years, and not just because of Mr Bolton and Mr Farage, who unsuccessfully stood for parliament in South Thanet in 2015.

On a visit to Margate earlier this year, then-leader Paul Nuttall described the town as "the heart of Ukip" while Diane James, the leader who notoriously lasted only 18 days in the job, also has roots in the county having attended school in Rochester.

On why the party has traditionally proved popular in the south east, Mr Bolton said: "Ukip does well in coastal communities, which I think is because of our position on fishing, and we do well in areas that are traditionally British.

"In Kent, with the Weald, the Battle of Britain and the White Cliffs, they all contribute towards that overall context.

"It's also been on the frontline – we've seen more immigrants jumping out of lorries."

He is not, however, as enthusiastic about the job done by Chris Wells at Thanet District Council over the last two years, and saved particular criticism for alleged broken promises over Manston Airport.

"So many times political parties get themselves elected saying they will do this and that and then just don't deliver.

"When it comes to Manston, I understand there are some commercial sensitivities around it, however Chris Wells should realise he is not just the leader of the council but the leader of the community and has a responsibility to keep them informed as to what is happening and why.

"You cannot maintain trust if you are delivering little and not communicating with people. I am afraid he has not covered himself or the party in glory.

"One of my leadership objectives is better preparation of candidates for being in office. We have failed to ensure candidates are of the best calibre and there has been a breakdown of strategic communication.

"What I would like to see him do is start talking to people. If he doesn't do that I suspect Thanet is going to be disastrous in the local government elections."

Pushed on whether he thought Cllr Wells should step down, he said: "Every day that goes past makes it harder.

"But there's still a solid base in Thanet and I think even if we take a massive hit next time around, there is still something to build on."

The council leader said in response: "I wish him well in the forthcoming leadership election, in many ways he has good qualities for the role.

"He also has other candidates to beat and seems to be desperately seeking headlines to shore up his campaign.

"Real political leadership is about being honest with the electorate on important issues.

"Manston has been a political football since before the general election of 2015. I suggest Mr Bolton looks closely at the facts rather than trotting out campaign myths about Manston. The chief myth surrounds the capacity of RiverOak to deliver what they claim in their volumes of suspect reasoning and half truth forecast.

"As for election predictions, Thanet is doing neither better nor worse than Ukip nationally, generally because of national issues and a leadership crisis.

"Mr Bolton may be keen to do the job, but it sounds like he is already getting his excuses in for coming electoral failure, which is not the best reason to vote for any leadership candidate.

"Any time he wants to listen to the truth, on Manston, Ukip nationally, and perhaps hear a few home truths on understanding local government, I am available.

"And have had that sort of excellent working relationship with every other leader to date."

Mr Bolton is clearly confident in his abilities as a leader, and laughed off suggestions he too would fail to last the distance, were he to be chosen for the top job.

"You have to have a thick skin. As a former police officer I have that – I've been assaulted, spat on and called every name under the sun," he said.

"I spent 27 months in Helmand, in which time the US marine corps battle group changed over five times. I was in the same place while the US felt it could only keep troops there for six months.

"I'm resilient and I've got the determination and the courage required."

The leadership vote is this coming Friday.

DECISION: The resort of Torquay, best known for hotelier Basil Fawlty, will be the venue where Ukip selects its new leader next week

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Dozens left homeless as blaze rips through flats

Community rallies around in style as more than 100 firefighters tackle major blaze at Holborough Lakes in Snodland

By Tom Pyman
Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

SNODLAND'S "overwhelming" community response has been hailed after a fire ripped through a block of flats in Holborough Lakes last weekend.

At its height, more than 100 firefighters were called to the three-storey building which contains 22 flats at Pollyfield Close on Saturday morning.

While nobody was killed in the blaze, dozens of people now find themselves homeless, with many residents claiming everything they own was destroyed in the inferno.

The cause of the fire is unknown at this stage but it is not believed to be suspicious. It is understood to have started on the third floor but the extent of the damage has hindered attempts to locate the cause.

However, the response of the local community has been unanimously praised, after thousands of pounds was raised in a matter of hours online to support those affected, while many others donated clothes and food, and cafes offered victims hot dinners free of charge.

Snodland town councillor Paul Hickmott told us: "We're all quite shocked by it. Although there were no fatalities, most people have lost everything.

"Local people have been collecting stuff for them, there's a collection box in the local Co-op and cafe.

"They still need to identify the cause of the fire but it all has to be repaired which will take a long time so I don't think they'll be moving back in a hurry."

The town's MP, the Conservative minister Tracey Crouch, spent several hours on the site of the blaze on Saturday.

She said: "The response to the incident from the fire brigade was absolutely first rate with at one point over 15 appliances in attendance.

"It appears 22 apartments were affected but everyone got out safe and are accounted for.

"Berkeley Homes, their managing agents, RMG (Residential Management Group) and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council were on site very early and have ensured all affected residents are being supported.

"I met some residents and most are with family or friends and others have been placed in hotel accommodation.

"The response from the community, individuals and organisations, and volunteer groups like the Red Cross was incredible and people's donations came in so thick and fast that a request went out for no more.

"The emergency services were being well looked after too with food and refreshments.

"Thank you to all those who have been in touch to offer help and support. Everyone really appreciates it.

"One fireman said 'you must be really proud of the community'...yes I am but also of him and his colleagues.

"My primary responsibilities will kick in a bit down the road when those affected inevitably find themselves facing challenges from the administrative issues that arise from events like this.

"But in the meantime it was reassuring to see those affected being dealt with quickly by all the relevant organisations and agencies and supported practically and emotionally by the wider community."

Following a similar blaze at the Tannery in Canterbury back in 2015, and indeed the Grenfell Tower tragedy in west London earlier this summer, there were calls for sprinklers to be installed on site.

Indeed in the aftermath of the Grenfell disaster, Canterbury councillors unanimously backed a motion for them to be fitted as part of the redevelopment of the block when they met in July.

However, bosses at Town & Country Housing stood firm and insisted they would not fit the devices, despite efforts to "shame" them into doing so.

When pushed on whether sprinklers should have been installed at the Snodland flats, however, councillors remained coy.

"The way the flats are built and the way it was dealt with shows it comes up to regulations," Cllr Hickmott said.

"You are not going to stop something burning. I'm not ruling sprinklers out totally but we need to see what the cause was first, up to now it appears to meet regulations."

Fellow councillor Debbie Alford-Smith added: "It's been overwhelming. In Canterbury it took two years to have things rebuilt and have people permanently rehoused.

"I obviously hope it's a quicker process but I am well aware it has to go through the correct procedures.

"I just hope in the short terms that these people get the support and help they need, not just physical items, but having people to talk to."

A spokesperson for Kent Fire and Rescue Service said: "The fire investigation by KFRS following the fire at Holborough Lakes, Snodland at the weekend is ongoing.

"This will include gaining evidence from any witnesses as well as excavating the fire scene, where this is possible, and there is remaining evidence to gather.

"At this moment within the investigation we do not believe there are any suspicious circumstances."

AFTER: Fire crews examine the damage of the blaze which ripped through the building last Saturday. Remarkably no one was hurt. Picture: PA

FLAMES: The fire took hold quickly. Picture: @B33tlebum

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Second hospital trust CEO quits

Glenn Douglas confirmed he is resigning from his post as chief of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust this week. It comes just days after CEO of the east Kent trust also revealed he's leaving

By Tom Pyman
Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

TWO of Kent's four hospital trusts are now without a permanent leader after the CEO of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust quit his post to take up a new role.

Glenn Douglas had been chief executive since 2007 and had overseen the opening of the Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury in 2011.

But this week he was appointed chief executive of the Kent and Medway Sustainability and Transformation Partnership - a body set up last year to oversee development of a so-called masterplan for health and social care across the county.

The plan, which is set to go out to public consultation after Christmas, outlines proposals to allow people to be treated nearer their own homes to help reduce the strain on hospital services, which in some areas of the county have been described as at breaking point.

Mr Douglas had been working as the partnership's senior responsible officer, but only on a part-time basis in conjunction with his role at MTW.

His departure comes just days after Matthew Kershaw sensationally announced he was to leave East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust to take up a post at a think-tank, meaning only the trusts in Medway and Dartford and Gravesham have an established chief in place.

Mr Douglas said: "I am delighted to be taking on this role full-time. Our plans to work together across health and social care to improve services for people in Kent and Medway are starting to take shape.

"Doctors, nurses and other health professionals, alongside social care practitioners and health and local authority leaders in Kent and Medway, have a clear and exciting ambition.

"We want to improve health and wellbeing, reduce health inequalities between different areas in our region, improve the quality of services so people get better clinical outcomes and patient experience, and create a sustainable system within the available resources, most importantly staff and funds.

"My role is to ensure we develop detailed plans and deliver this ambition successfully, in partnership with our staff and local people.

"It is with some sadness that I leave my current role. My time at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust has been extremely rewarding.

"However, I know the trust will continue to go from strength to strength, as well as remaining a key partner in the wider Kent and Medway health and care plans for the future."

Felicity Cox, NHS England director of commissioning operations for the south east, said: "Across the country, health and social care systems have started to work in more collaborative ways to improve care for local people.

"Bringing together partners from across the NHS, as well as local authorities, voluntary and community sectors, requires significant focus, commitment and dedicated leadership.

"Glenn's appointment to this full-time role will strengthen what can be achieved for the people of Kent and Medway."

MTW chairman David Highton confirmed Jim Lusby, who previously worked as portfolio director at what is now known as NHS Improvement, with responsibility for oversight of NHS trusts in the south east, had been appointed acting CEO, and insisted patient wellbeing remained an absolute priority for the trust.

Mr Lusby said: "We are an ambitious organisation and have the potential to be among the best providers of hospital care.

CHANGE: Glenn Douglas will become chief executive of STP

"My aim over the coming months is to help MTW realise its potential by continuing to ensure we do everything we can to provide the highest possible standards of patient care."

The trust says a recruitment process will be carried out to appoint a permanent CEO in due course.

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Water firm top for complaints

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

ONE of Kent's biggest water suppliers has been told by a utilities watchdog it must improve after racking up the most written complaints of any water company in the country for the fifth year in a row.

Annual figures published this week by the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) show Southern Water reduced its written complaints to 8,733 from 15,797 the previous year - a drop of some 45 per cent - but is still under pressure as the worst performing water company.

Southern also reported a 54 per cent increase in 'unwanted contacts', where its customers had to pick up the phone to resolve an issue.

The company has attributed this to a review of its internal recording processes.

Sir Tony Redmond, London and south east chair for CCWater, said: "We are encouraged by Southern's improvement but its performance remains poor in comparison to the rest of the industry.

"There is a lot more work to be done by the company."

Southern Water's chief customer officer, Simon Oates, said: "I am pleased we are the most improved company across the industry in terms of achieving the largest reduction in written complaints.

"Despite this 45 per cent reduction we are still at the foot of the industry league tables, so we'll continue to work closely with our colleagues at CCWater to drive forward further improvements and move up the rankings.

"Our teams have worked so hard over the last year and we are all committed to continuing to improve responsiveness and focus more on meeting the individual needs of our customers.

"We've carried out a thorough review to ensure we can make it easier to do business with us - whether it's online, face-to-face or over the phone.

"This includes making significant improvements to our website and customer contact centre.

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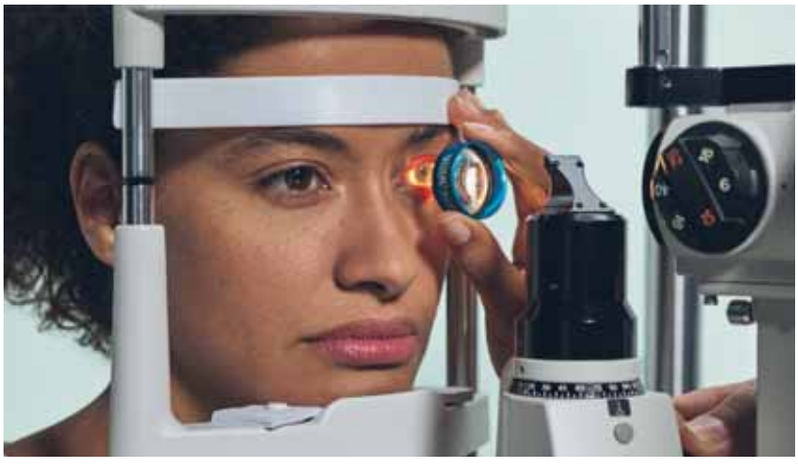

TIME TO TRANSFORM EYE HEALTH

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and Specsavers are urging people to have regular eye tests to help maintain and protect their sight.

Research* commissioned by the charity and high street opticians has revealed that one in five people will live with sight loss in their lifetime, despite at least half of all cases being avoidable. With nearly six million people in the UK currently living with sight-threatening conditions, nearly every family in Britain is touched by sight problems in some way.

While sight is the nation's most precious sense by far, with 78% of people polled saying it is the one they would least like to lose, a quarter of UK adults are still risking avoidable sight loss by not having had an eye test in the past 2 years.

Of those who had not been for an eye test during that time period, 33% did not think that there was anything wrong with their eyes, while 24% said that they just didn't have the time.

Specsavers believes that eye care should be accessible to everyone. Specsavers Healthcall offers a free NHS sight test at home and a comprehensive home eye care service to those who cannot visit a store unaccompanied.

As with all Specsavers staff, the home visiting teams are becoming Dementia Friends to help people with dementia recognise sight loss. The research reveals that only one in three people who qualify for a home visit are aware of the service. It is vital that, in an ageing society, we meet the needs of these vulnerable people and increase awareness.

Specsavers' clinical spokesperson Dr Nigel Best said: 'Some people are waiting until they experience sight loss before booking an eye test, which means they are potentially preventing their optician from detecting signs of eye health problems or other medical issues at an early stage. Early intervention is vital in the management and successful treatment of many conditions.'

RNIB acting CEO Sally Harvey added: 'We would encourage anyone who has put off going for an eye test to book one at the earliest opportunity.'

* YouGov Survey commissioned by Specsavers and RNIB 23rd June - 7th July 2017 of 6,430 UK adults aged 18+.

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Source: RNIB and Specsavers State of the Nation Eye Health 2017: A Year in Review. A regular test is at least once every two years. ©2017 Specsavers. All rights reserved.

Fears of Brexit as apple pickers shrink

Shortage of migrant workers could spell major problems for our farmers as top fruit growers start to harvest bumper crop

By Tom Pyman
Tom.Pyman@archant.co.uk

THE number of migrant workers picking fruit on Kent farms is down by around a fifth on last year, a grower has claimed.

September typically marks the start of the top fruit season where apples and pears are finally harvested after months of cultivation.

However, farmers have faced particular challenges this year, with the weather often conspiring against them, as well as the uncertain climate that lies ahead in a post-EU Britain looming large.

One of the major issues facing Kent after Brexit is the access to labour from overseas, with Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale warning the QEQM Hospital in Margate will shut if EU citizens are forced to leave (see page 5).

His Conservative colleague Helen Whately, who represents Faversham and Mid Kent, has also claimed many of the county's farms would be at risk of going out of business if they failed to secure access to seasonal workers once Britain is out of the EU.

James Simpson, of the Tonbridge-based grower, Adrian Scripps, told KoS how a need to pick apples and pears earlier in the year was having a knock-on effect.

"Last year was a late season and we didn't start picking until mid-September, whereas this year we're now nearly finished," he said.

"It's probably come about two weeks earlier which has put us under a little bit of pressure. The late varieties don't get later but the early ones get earlier.

"A number of workers come in early in April and May to pick soft fruit and then move on to top fruit.

"Early on there were reasonably good numbers for strawberries and they took a phenomenal crop for which they only just had enough staff to do that.

"So they earned very good money and got plenty of overtime, so when it came to top fruit season, many had felt they'd earned enough and wanted to return home, so we are finding far fewer people transferring to top fruit.

"We have seen fewer arrive. Previously farms had a waiting list of staff, but this year they're either far shorter lists or they don't exist at all.

"That's in part related to earnings at home and partly because of the exchange rate. As sterling has weakened, other currencies have strengthened and so it's made it less attractive.

"But what we can honestly say is many of the workers would prefer to come to the UK because they are treated well."

The government has remained coy over how agriculture will access seasonal labour from overseas after Brexit, which has caused must frustration from within the industry.

Mr Simpson said: "Most farms are getting by this year but it's a struggle and they're certainly short in some areas, on average there's probably a 20 per cent shortage in workers.

"The issue next year is that it's the last year that we have freedom of movement, so there's only one crop

LABOUR: There are concerns over recruiting pickers post Brexit

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left and we usually book labour well in advance.

"Of course, we are hoping the government will give us access to labour because it's not just an agricultural problem, in hospitality and the health service there's going to be a shortage of staff.

"There's confidence with most growers that there will be something in the short-term, perhaps open borders for two years, and that we're not going to go off a cliff immediately, but we're still heading towards that cliff.

"We've had meetings with ministers and there hasn't been a lot of clarity. We are at such a crucial stage of negotiations and the EU wins every negotiation so we're rather fearful."

Access to labour hasn't been the only challenge facing growers in Kent this year, however, with a series of sharp frosts in April and May presenting their own range of difficulties for producers.

If there are problems here, there are problems across the country, with Kent typically producing around two-thirds of the entire nation's harvest.

"The big issue always centres around weather," Mr Simpson said.

"We rarely moan about it and get on with it but essentially we had a series of quite severe frosts, which can kill fruit - it's no different to the effect on roses in your garden.

"Cox were particularly badly affected, the national crop is down 30 per cent on what we ordinarily expect.

"But it's variable, some farms have none at all, some have a full crop, it just depends where it hits."

Gala and Bramley varieties have also been affected, although while the external appearance of some has suffered, growers insist the quality of taste and flavour remains.

With frosts and hailstorms severely impacting growth in the West Country, farmers anticipate Kent's contribution to increase this year, providing close to 70 per cent of the total apples produced.

Despite the challenges, industry chiefs are remaining positive, with new research from English Apples & Pears, which organises and promotes the industry, saying nine out of 10 shoppers who expressed a preference said they would buy British apples whenever possible.

Chief executive Steven Munday said: "This is a huge vote of confidence for British growers.

"As Brexit beckons, it appears shoppers here are actively supporting British produce and, in particular, that they are looking for British apples in the shops."

To tap into rising demand for British apples, UK growers will be unveiling a new sticker to be placed on millions of apples and packs nationwide, helping consumers to identify and buy British apples easily in stores.

Mr Munday added: "We're looking to Britain's retailers to support the country's apple growers by using our logo on pack and at point of sale.

"In our survey, better display and identification of apples as British in the shops were also key concerns for consumers, who said they would buy more apples if they could easily see that they come from Britain."

GROWTH: Kent is expected to deliver around 70 per cent of the nation's apple harvest this year.

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Rejected in a roundabout way

It may not be enough to slam the brakes on the £102m scheme to revamp the Stockbury Roundabout off the M2, but Swale councillors threw a spanner in the works when it voted to reject the proposal

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

PLANS to upgrade a major traffic pinch point near Sittingbourne have hit a stumbling block after the local council rejected the suggested proposal.

Highways England earlier this month outlined plans to consult on a £102 million scheme to transform the Stockbury Roundabout - junction five from the M2 for Maidstone and Sittingbourne and which then links, via the A249 past the Kent Showground at Detling, to the M20.

But Swale Borough Council voted unanimously against the plans on Wednesday night, saying they did not go far enough to solve the problems on the roundabout.

A dozen options, including an A249 flyover above the roundabout, and a plan to replace the roundabout with a three-tier interchange, were initially considered by roads chiefs but scrapped because they decided they would not have a sufficient effect on reducing congestion, or they were too expensive.

Instead, a fresh consideration, known as Option 12A, has been brought forward for the public to feed back on.

This option will see the roundabout enlarged to provide a new through route for cars using the A249, new dedicated left-turn lanes for traffic travelling from the A249 southbound to the M2 London-bound and from the A249 northbound to the M2 coast-bound.

A new single lane slip road from the M2 coast-bound to the A249 northbound which would avoid the roundabout altogether is also proposed, while the existing connection from the Maidstone Road to the roundabout would be closed, with Maidstone Road re-routed to link with Oad Street.

Additionally, the existing junction of Oad Street with the A249 would be closed and a new link would be provided south of the existing Oad Street to connect directly with the roundabout, while the Honeycrock Hill junction with the A249 would also be closed for safety reasons.

The council wants to see another more expensive option at around £160 million which will include a three-tier interchange that will be able to cope with the predicted higher traffic volume in the future.

Swale councillors passed a motion this week which states the authority rejects Option 12A as it "will not provide a long term solution to the issues faced here by many drivers and businesses". Instead, the council wants the triple tier Option 10 and insists the government finds the extra cash.

Highways England planned to send in the bulldozers in 2020, and does not actually need consent from Swale council for work to start.

Conservative leader of Swale councillor, Andrew Bowles, said: "The council, along with the local MP, have lobbied hard to secure funding to address the long-standing congestion and safety issues experienced by road users passing through junction five of the M2.

"Having secured the £100m, it is disappointing that this is considered sufficient to provide only one possible option, which in my view has been designed to the budget, rather than to provide a junction that will be able to provide a solution for the medium to long-term.

"I believe an option which includes a fly-over makes the most sense, but whatever the final design, it must be able to cope with not only the growth we are being asked to deliver but also the impacts of the proposed Lower Thames Crossing, which will drive increased traffic flows along the M2 corridor."

The views were echoed by Labour's group leader in Swale, Roger Truelove. He told KoS: "We already have tremendous tailbacks on the A249 related to traffic lights at the Stockbury roundabout.

"This plan maintains traffic lights and so I can't see it helping. All they are providing is a slip road for traffic coming from London that wants to use the roundabout. It seems that it is an invitation for all traffic to use Maidstone Road and Oad Street and it will hit the villages.

"It will slightly alleviate the current problem but with developments in the local plan it just isn't adequate."

Concerns have also been raised over the impact on traffic approaching the Kent Showground, further down the A249 in Detling, for popular events such as the Kent County Show.

Highways England said it welcomed all feedback during the consultation phase.

Earlier this month, senior project manager Neil Andrew told us:

BLOW: Councillors at Swale Borough Council, offices pictured above, want a more expensive option to help cope with future traffic levels

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"We've gone through the options looking at the high level objectives that were set – that is looking towards reducing the number of incidents because this junction is identified within the top 50 national casualty locations, with 111 personal injury accidents between 2011 and 2015.

"We can see it's a very high accident location for sideswipes as people are moving around the roundabout and also as people are approaching on the A249.

"It's also looked towards journey times so trying to reduce the congestion experienced on both the approaches from the M2 and A249.

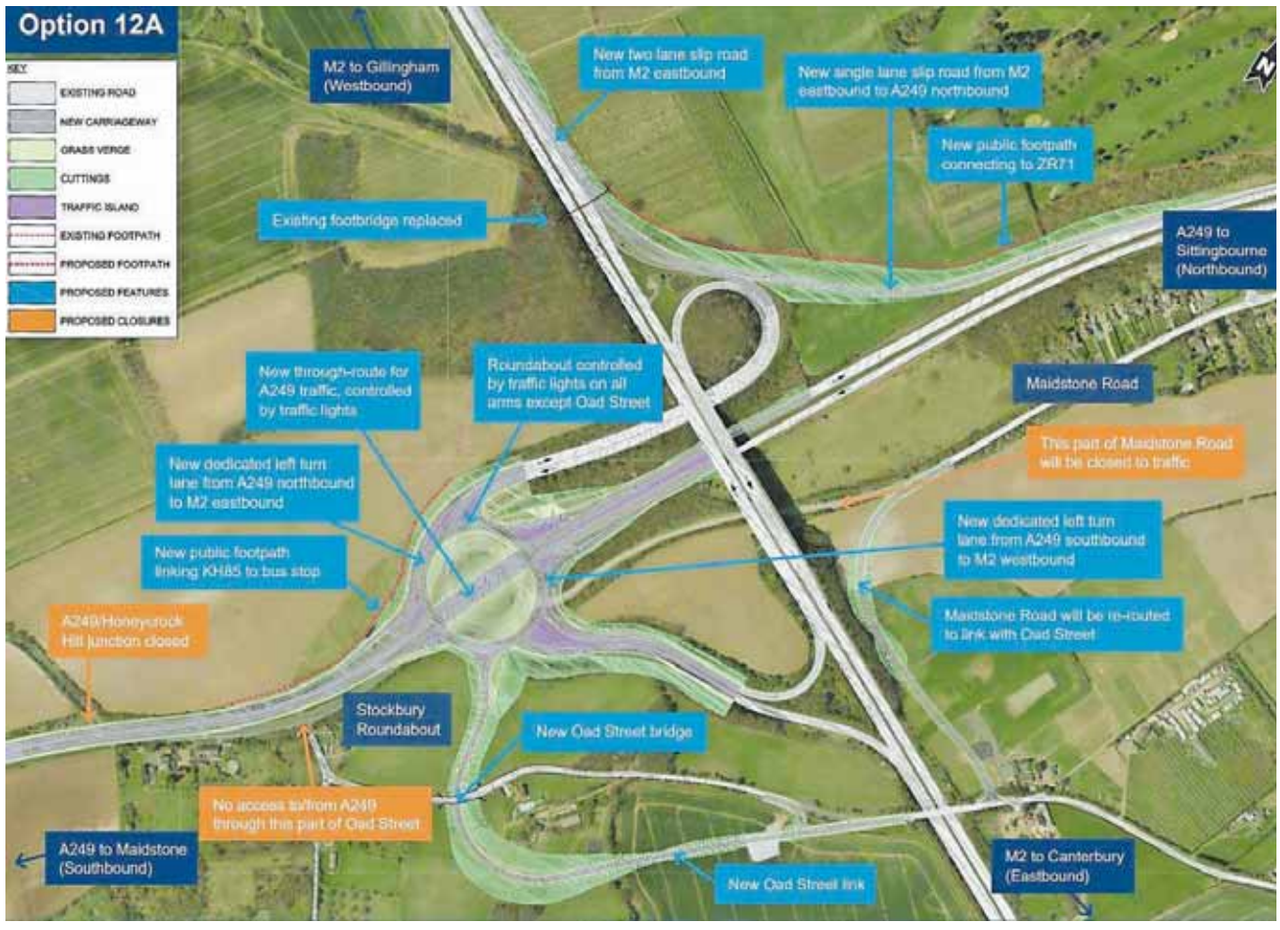
"The scheme we're developing is also aimed at keeping traffic on the strategic road network.

"A large number of individuals at the moment are using rural roads to get around the junction and causing subsequent congestion and anxiety for residents and local communities.

"The commitment made to government is to begin work on this junction by March 2020 and at the moment that is what our current programme is showing.

"In terms of an actual construction project, for a scheme of this nature, we're looking at 18 to 24 months so we're anticipating this being open to traffic by summer 2022."

■ **What do you think of the plans? Do you agree with Swale councillors? Share your views and join the debate. Email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or write to The Editor, KoS, Room G46, The Panorama, Park Street, Ashford TN24 8EZ. We'll print some of the best on a future letter's page.**



PROPOSALS: This is the scheme put forward by Highways England to transform the existing Stockbury Roundabout which it claims will lower the number of accidents and ease traffic flows. It has got the thumbs down, however, from elected local representatives.

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How to add value to your home and make it sell even quicker

BIG home improvements, like loft conversions and extensions, usually add value, but smaller changes can also increase the value of your home and make it more sellable

So what are some of the best to help you sell your property?

Wooden floors are a wonderful addition to any home, whatever its style or period, and are a practical alternative to carpet, especially in hallways and reception rooms.

If your home has original floorboards, sanding and varnishing or staining them should add value and create a lovely, hardwearing feature. However, original floorboards aren't always in good condition and may be rotten, or have been butchered over the years, which can make them hard to restore.

Another problem is they can be draughty - on the ground floor, there will be a gap between the floorboards and the earth, which is needed for ventilation but can send cold air up into the room above.

If your home doesn't have original floorboards or the floorboards are in a bad state, solid or engineered-wood flooring gives you a similar look but without the draughts (some underlays help with soundproofing and damp-proofing too).

Both solid wood and engineered wood are now widely available in tongue-and-groove boards that click together which is particularly easy for DIYers to fit and some engineered wood has a wonderful woodgrain texture that's even better than original floorboards. Engineered wood only has a top layer of real wood, which varies in depth, with other layers underneath, so it can't be sanded as many times as solid wood, but it does have other advantages.

Radiators are, of course, very practical, but they also have a decorative function that's often overlooked. If you're renovating your home, or even just a room or two, changing old, unattractive radiators makes a big difference to the look (and often improves the heat output too) and if you fit new bog-standard radiators, you're selling the renovation short. Modern column radiators work well in most interiors because they're a contemporary take on a classic design. Radiators like these make a renovation extra special and are well worth paying more for.

Almost everyone loves a real fire, but open fires are generally only around 15-30 per cent efficient, as most of the heat goes up the chimney. Wood-burning stoves are a better investment, as they're much more efficient and have other advantages, such as keeping smoke and sparks contained. Wood burners come in many different styles, from traditional to contemporary, and are a great addition to your home's central heating when it's really cold. Plus, they're ideal for heating a room or rooms when it's not cold enough to have the heating on.

One of the best improvements you can do is to make a room lighter, but it isn't always possible to have big windows and glass doors - if there are planning restrictions or your budget's tight, for example. Although

planning permission is sometimes needed for them, roof windows (available for both sloping and flat roofs) can flood a room with light - even one small one can make a big difference, so if you have a dark room directly below a roof, don't overlook this possibility. Roof windows are more innovative than you might think with skylights with different types of glazing, remote controls, and some that automatically close when they detect rain and even that fold out into balconies.

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Lower Halsto… am, Luddes… ld-on-Sea, … ne, Lynsted,
Manston, Ma… y, Marshb… ield, Ma… th, Mersham,
Milstead, Mi… anet, Mocl… kton, Mu… lestead, New
Hythe, New… ngreen, Ne… Nonington, …, Nurstead,
Oare, Offha… l Romney… Otford, Ot… th, Painters
Ash, Painter… Peene, … ood, Peth… tt, Pluckley,
Postling, Pre… fall, Rec… lichborough… Ringwould,
Ripple, Riv… sham, Rolv… , Rucking… , Ryarsh, St
Mary Hoo, … altwood, … ndling, Sa… :, Seal Chart,
Seal, Seas… Sevenoak… xhurst, St… epherdswell,
Shepway, Shipbourne, Shirkoak, Sholden, Sh… vell, Sissinghurst, Smarden, Smeeth, Snargate,
Snowdown, South Darenth, Southfleet, Speldhurst, … t Nicholas at Wade, Stanford, Stansted, Staple,
Staplehurst, Staplestreet, Stelling Minnis, Stockb…
Common, Stubbs Cross, Stuppington, Sturry, Sund…
Swanscombe, Swattenden, Swingate, T…
Thurnham, Tilmanstone, T…
Uplees, Upnor, U…
Waltham, …

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STAR: Jeremy Hardy started performing back when Margaret Thatcher was PM - but an awful lot has happened since then leaving him adrift

Sorry, I haven't a clue about bewildering modern politics

Jeremy Hardy returns and admits he 'doesn't know what to think anymore'

HE may have once stood up to the might of Israel's army in a documentary, but Jeremy Hardy's political ire is of a more nuanced, measured and personal stripe these days.

For his current live show, he feels as though his act and material are a fair reflection of what's going on in the country just now. "There isn't a driving sense of rebellion, everything is so disparate now. When I started comedy there was a real sense of polarity: you had Thatcher and the miners and you took sides. But now people are voting on different issues and it's all over the place.

"A lot of my demographic is quite weary. I feel like I'm entertaining the troops who aren't that confident about whether they're going to survive the war."

And entertain them he most certainly will.

Now in his fourth decade of a successful stand-up career, Hardy is one of Britain's most critically lauded comics. Rising through the vibrant 'alternative cabaret' scene of London in the early 1980s, he won the prestigious Perrier Award in 1988, has become a fixture on Radio 4 through shows such as The News Quiz and Jeremy Hardy Speaks To The Nation, and his membership of the legendary I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue team has brought him before a whole new live audience with its touring show.

Hardy has also appeared on film opposite Robert 'Twilight' Pattinson in 2011's How To Be, while the aforementioned encounter with the Israeli army was in 2002's fittingly titled documentary, Jeremy Hardy v The Israeli Army.

This diverse CV now means that an audience at a Jeremy Hardy show could be there for a variety of reasons. "I never quite know who the audience is," he admits. "You'll get some Radio 4 listeners who are Conservative, though quietly so, and some people come along because they've seen a leaflet. Others might have heard me on I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue which has almost no politics whatsoever but they've heard me singing one song to the tune of another and that's what they think I'll be doing."

What Jeremy Hardy will certainly be doing for this show is taking the political temperature of the nation, albeit through a more personal lens. "I am talking about politics but more about how these things impact on me and affect me emotionally in terms of feeling bewildered and battered by them. I'm not trying to sound like an authority and people don't need to bring notebooks to the show. It's much more the ramblings and discontents of a person in the back half of life.

"I try to do a show that isn't just me banging on about my point of view. I try to let people know that I'm also bewildered about things, that I don't have any solutions and that I'm just trying to make sense of it myself. I think that's the best way to be a comedian because a large part of humour is wrestling with things and having coping strategies. Certainly, I don't know what to think about anything right now but that's partly about getting older and getting less confident in what you think about things."

Jeremy Hardy performs at the Gulbenkian in Canterbury on October 29.

Tickets on sale now.

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Years in the planning, model train exhibition's big weekend

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

MODEL train fans will have a treat in the new year with a major exhibition in Canterbury.

The City of Canterbury Model Railway Society is set to open the doors to its 29th annual exhibition, to be held at St Anselm's school on Old Dover Road, on January 22 and 23.

Enthusiasts will be able to feast their eyes on at least 14 model railway layouts during the weekend at an exhibition which is widely regarded by exhibitors, traders and visitors as one of the best in the county.

And do not underestimate the scale of planning involved, with visitors getting to see layouts literally years in the making, while work is already under way for the 2020 event.

Explains a spokesman for the show: "Planning for an annual model railway exhibition begins years in advance, due to the popularity of layouts featured in model railway magazines.

"The City of Canterbury Model Railway Society's intrepid exhibition manager Jeremy Kennett travels the length and breadth of the country visiting model railway exhibitions to find the very best layouts to invite to exhibit, necessitating Jeremy having to maintain a rolling three-year planning schedule.

"Work is already underway to identify exhibitors for the January 2020 exhibition, in addition to the special 30th anniversary exhibition in 2019."

Among the layouts on display will be a scale model of Rolvenden station, near Ashford, by Robin Gay and James Makin's Loftus Road, based on Kensington Olympia station and featuring detailed scenic work by the member of the Worthing Model Railway Club.

Meanwhile, the Canterbury society will be showcasing its own new Holt Street layout in N gauge for the first time.

Children will be kept entertained by the Guy's Fizz Bang and Fawkesville layout which comes complete with push-button operation for children to use and includes a firework factory.

The event is open between 10am to 5pm on the Saturday and 10am to 4pm on the Sunday. For details on the club see www.ccmrs.co.uk.

LAYOUTS: The event is designed to highlight model railways. Picture: Phil Parker

Enrol at Spook Academy

POPULAR tourist attraction the Canterbury Tales is offering Halloween family fun during weekends next month and half term week as it opens its Spook Academy offering lessons in potions and broomsticks.

Eighties themed musical

GRAVESEND Theatre Guild presents a new 'comedy-adventure' musical featuring the hits of the Eighties.

80s Girl vs The Jungle will be performed at the Guild Theatre between October 4-7 and is written and directed by David Ames. Tickets are on sale now.

All that lunchtime jazz

THE house jazz band from London's 606 Club, the RMG Collective, will open a series of lunchtime concerts at the University of Kent's Colyer Fergusson Hall in Canterbury on October 11 at 1.10pm.

Magnificent Seven ride in

THE Magnificent Seven group of professional artists exhibit at Sun Pier House in Chatham until September 30.

They include experts in collage, photography and landscapes. There will also be an artists' talk on October 1 from 2pm to 4pm which is open to all.

It's all Strictly Brendan

STRICTLY Come Dancing star Brendan Cole will be waltzing into the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells in March with his All Night Long show.

Featuring a 14-piece band, he performs on March 6.

Quex set for scare tales

QUEX Park is welcoming back its frightening Halloween event, Quextreme this October.

Taking place between October 27-29, there are three scare scenarios to make your blood run cold at its site in Birchington, near Margate.

Tickets for Harvest II, Contagion 2 and Forest of Fools are on sale now.

From Benidorm to panto

ALADDIN will entertain the crowds at the EM Forster Theatre at Tonbridge School from December 16 to 30.

It stars Benidorm's Michael Fenton Stevens as Widow Twankey.

Hazlitt set for Harry & Chris

HARRY and Chris, a duo delivering a blend of rap, jazz and comedy, will perform at Maidstone's Hazlitt Arts Centre on October 28.

Harry Baker, whose TedX talks have attracted more than three million views, and jazz musician Chris Read debuted the show with a sell-out run at the Edinburgh Festival.

Battle of Britain show returns next summer

By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

ORGANISERS of the Battle of Britain Air Show at Headcorn have confirmed the event will be back next year.

The event will be staged over the weekend of June 30 and July 1 in 2018 with thousands once again set to descend for the popular aerobatic displays.

Each day will see the Battle of Britain display which will feature aircraft from the war time era when the Allies saw off the threat of the German Luftwaffe as they attempted to gain supremacy of the skies, in 1940, prior to a planned ground invasion.

Winston Churchill famously declared the heroic fighter pilots 'The Few' who helped protect the security of the nation in what was seen as a key turning point in the conflict as the Germans invaded Europe.

Among the aircraft taking part are Spitfires and Hurricanes plus the likes of the Tiger Moth and Harvard T6 - all courtesy of Headcorn-based firm Aero Legends.

Headcorn Aerodrome will again be the setting for the event, which next year will be commemorating the 78th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the RAF.

Joining the show will be cadets from across the county as well as serving officers and veterans.

A spokesman for the organiser said: "Next year's show will feature more aircraft with multiple Spitfires and Hurricanes and attendance from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (BBMF).

"In addition, there will be attractions for all the family including a funfair, stalls, unrivalled choreographed air displays and flight experiences. This really will be an event not to miss."

Once again, there will also be the opportunity to buy special tickets which will allow those attending to actually fly in some of the aircraft taking part in the event in order to gain a birds-eye view of the proceedings.

Tickets for all are available now. See www.headcornevents.co.uk.

AERIAL: View from the skies of the event site earlier this year

MOTHS: You can even snap up a ticket to fly in some of the aircraft

The Cumberbatch train is not slowing down yet

Gemma Dunn speaks to the Sherlock star as he returns to our screens tonight in hard-hitting drama

WHAT isn't Benedict Cumberbatch working on at the moment?

Since earning his breakthrough playing physicist Stephen Hawking in the 2004 TV film Hawking, the actor hasn't stopped - whether it be treading the boards as Hamlet, heading up hit BBC drama Sherlock or landing an Oscar nomination for his turn as mathematician Alan Turing in The Imitation Game.

In fact one glance at the 41-year-old's schedule - Gypsy Boy, The Jungle Book and How The Grinch Stole Christmas make up just a few of his upcoming projects - is enough to trigger a sweat.

I'm not surprised, then, to find Cumberbatch exhausted when we meet.

This time his lack of shut eye is due to the fact he's just flown in from LA.

But while he will reprise his role as the Sorcerer Supreme in 2018's Avengers Infinity War, it's not all Hollywood blockbusters for the London-born talent.

Excitingly his latest outing is for the BBC (fans will be likely waiting a long time for a fifth season of Sherlock) and it comes in the form of chilling drama, The Child In Time.

Based on Ian McEwan's prize-winning 1987 novel of the same name, the heartbreaking tale is the story of successful author Stephen Lewis (Cumberbatch), who is confronted with the unthinkable when his child is abducted in a supermarket.

STAR: The Child in Time airs this evening on BBC1

As the scarring moment replays in the years that follow, the 90-minute film - the first feature to be made under Cumberbatch's production company, SunnyMarch TV - explores a marriage devastated by the loss of a child and the struggle and longing for hope that stems from all-consuming grief.

"It's about how two people who had each other before their love was manifest in a child break apart and come together again when they realise that they have to accept their circumstance," he explains of his character's relationship with on-screen wife Julie (played by Trainspotting star Kelly Macdonald).

"And never be in denial of it, never forget it, but also live a life and move on."

It was just the role Cumberbatch - a self-confessed 'huge McEwan nut' - had been looking for.

"I knew I wanted to play Stephen," he declares, having previously starred as Paul Marshall in Joe Wright's adaptation of McEwan's 2001 novel Atonement.

"I had a desire to portray someone closer to me, someone who didn't acquire a few hours in make up or a great deal of strenuous - I wouldn't say mask work - but just something transformative.

"It's a horrific circumstance and it's very, very upsetting. So yeah, it was tough."

The Child In Time will air on BBC One tonight, Sunday.

Apple festival frenzy

BROGDALE hosts the annual National Apple Festival at its site near Faversham next month.

Taking place across the weekend of October 14-15, a host of rare, heritage and unusual apple varieties will be available on the day to taste and buy, with the National Fruit Collection showcasing its work with a special education display. Tickets are available to buy in advance now.

Orchestra's favourites

KENT orchestra Revelation Strings will be performing a mix of classics from film and stage, among them Star Wars and Star Trek, when it brings its show to the Sarah Thorne Theatre in Broadstairs on October 7.

Lead by international cellist Matthew Sharp, tickets for the event are on sale now and can be booked via the website www.sarahthornetheatre.co.uk and cost £10 for adults and £5 for children.

Neville Staple show

FORMER The Specials singer Neville Staple will be bringing his relentlessly touring band to Tunbridge Wells on November 11.

The star, who was also part of chart-toppers Fun Boy Three, will bring the Neville Staple Band to The Forum. Opening on the night will be support act The Sweeney.

Tickets for the show, which are on sale now via the venue, cost £16.50.

Illustrator's exhibition

CHATHAM Historic Dockyard is staging an exhibition dedicated to children's illustrator Michael Foreman from September 29 to November 26.

Taking place at the No.1 Smithery, it will showcase his work over the last 50 years and will feature a host of original artwork alongside props and costumes relating to the many books he has worked on during his career.

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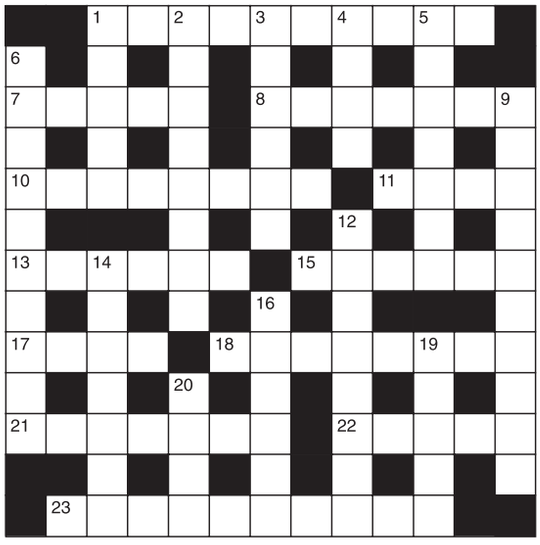
PUZZLES

DOUBLE CROSSWORD



Quick

Across

1. Precursor (10)
7. Traverse (5)
8. Leaves (7)
10. Insurrection (8)
11. Split (4)
13. Blush (6)
15. Bend (6)
17. Near (4)
18. Journalist (8)
21. Euphoria (7)
22. Notions (5)
23. Amelioration (10)

Down

1. Storey (5)
2. Thwarted (8)
3. Purify (6)
4. Futile (4)
5. Avoidance (7)
6. Happening (10)
9. Undertaking (10)
12. Settle (8)
14. Humiliate (7)
16. More acute (6)
19. Handle (5)
20. Talent (4)

Cryptic

Across

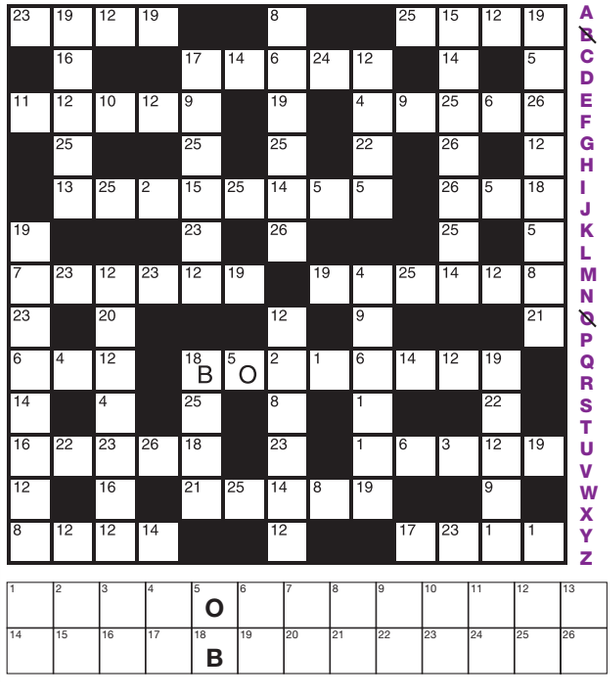
1. Prepare the road by putting the flags down! (4,3,3)
7. Precise piece of complex activity (5)
8. Submits to the situation and gives up the job (7)
10. This type of window can't seem different (8)
11. Grey-clad minstrel returns (4)
13. See 1 Down.
15. See 1 Down.
17. Terrible nickname for one near the forefront of battle (4)
18. Jack goes round the mine (8)
21. Well-known reason for being refused a restaurant booking! (7)
22. Where you'll find the prisoner with nothing but a big fiddle! (5)
23. See 6 Down.

Down

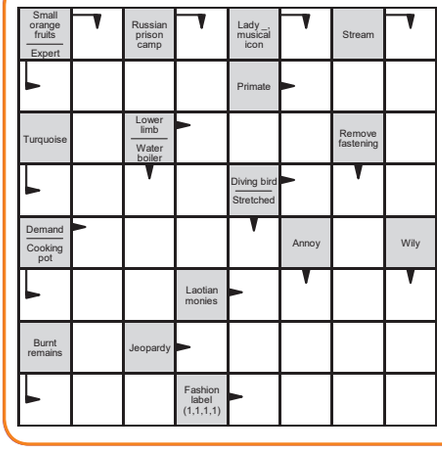
1, 13Ac. and 15Ac. Doesn't operate as the leading bowman (5,6,6)
2. I'm involved in vast mixture of nutritious elements (8)
3. Putting it up over the arena is wearisome (6)
4. You'll find comfort in the lounge, as expected (4)
5. Reg Dean could become wrathful (7)
6 and 23Ac. With the score in mind, this requires a striker with good timing (10,10)
9. One of the small parts of a U-boat? (10)
12. Top hostelry in unusual place (8)
14. Charles X to mete out punishment (7)
16. Desk required for the office (6)
19. Skilfully direct one in a conspiracy (5)
20. Assist in making some of the state banks suffer a set back (4)

CODEWORD

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter.
For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.



Arrowword

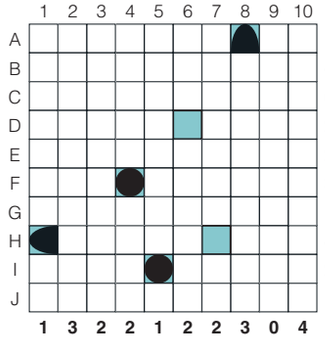


Enter your answers in the direction indicated by the arrows.

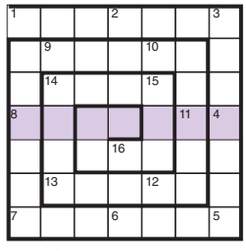
Battleships

Find where ships shown below are hidden in the grid. The numbers to the right of and below the grid indicate how many of the squares in that row are filled in with ships or parts of ships. The ships do not touch each other, even diagonally. Some of the squares have been filled to start you off.

THE FLEET
1 x Battleship
2 x Cruiser
3 x Destroyer
4 x Submarine



Word Spiral



Starting from 1, fill in the grid clockwise with four-letter words. The last letter of each word becomes the first letter of the next to reveal the key word in the shaded boxes.

1. Settee
2. At the summit
3. Bucket
4. Be short of
5. Military cap
6. Skye, say
7. Heroic
8. Beckon
9. Luxuriant
10. Exaggerated publicity
11. Revise
12. Threesome
13. Darts line
14. Cupid
15. Offscourings
16. Grumble

Keyword clue: Part of a church

SUDOKU

Hard

		6	5			7		
	7						2	6
	4			6	8			
	2				1	8		
5					2			7
		4	3				1	
			8	5			6	
9	8						3	
					9	4		

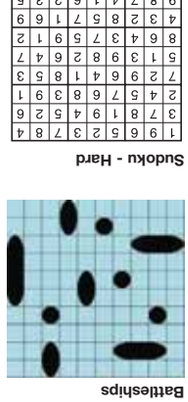
Easy

	1	7			2			3
			9				1	6
3				1		8		7
	2	5			1			4
9		3		8		6	5	
	8		5			9	3	
7		8		2				5
	5				9	3	7	
4		1	7				6	

Solutions

Arrowword

Battleships



Sudoku - Easy

5	1	7	8	6	2	4	9	3
8	4	2	9	3	7	5	1	6
3	6	9	4	1	5	8	2	7
6	2	5	3	9	1	7	8	4
9	7	3	2	8	4	6	5	1
1	8	4	5	7	6	9	3	2
7	9	8	6	2	3	1	4	5
2	5	6	1	4	9	3	7	8
4	3	1	7	5	8	2	6	9

Sudoku - Hard

1	9	6	5	2	3	7	8	4
3	7	8	1	9	4	5	2	6
2	4	5	7	6	8	3	9	1
7	2	9	6	4	1	8	5	3
5	1	3	9	8	2	6	4	7
8	6	4	3	7	5	9	1	2
4	3	2	8	5	7	1	6	9
9	8	7	4	1	6	2	3	5
6	5	1	2	3	9	4	7	8

Double Crossword

Cryptic
Across: 1 Pave the way; 7 Exact; 8 Resigns; 10 Casement; 11 Drab; 13 Second; 15 Fiddle; 17 Ivan; 18 Turnspit; 21 Notable; 22 Cello; 23 Instrument.
Down: 1 Play; 2 Vitamins; 3 Tiring; 4 Ease; 5 Angered; 6 Percussion; 9 Subsection; 12 Pinnacle; 14 Chasten; 16 Bureau; 19 Pilot; 20 Abet.

Quick
Across: 1 Forerunner; 7 Cross; 8 Foliage; 10 Uprising; 11 Rift; 13 Redden; 15 Corner; 17 Nigh; 18 Reporter; 21 Elation; 22 Ideas; 23 Betterment.
Down: 1 Floor; 2 Resisted; 3 Refine; 4 Null; 5 Evasion; 6 Occurrence; 9 Enterprise; 12 Colonise; 14 Degrade; 16 Keener; 19 Treat; 20 Gift.

Codeword
1=F, 2=N, 3=V, 4=C, 5=O, 6=I, 7=O, 8=D, 9=L, 10=W, 11=J, 12=E, 13=K, 14=R, 15=G, 16=T, 17=P, 18=B, 19=S, 20=X, 21=Y, 22=H, 23=U, 24=Z, 25=A, 26=M

Word Spiral
1 Sofa; 2 Atop; 3 Pail; 4 Lack; 5 Kept; 6 Isle; 7 Epic; 8 Call; 9 Lush; 10 Hype; 11 Edit; 12 Trio; 13 Ochre; 14 Eros; 15 Scum; 16 Moan.
Keyword: Chancel

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Women Seeking

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ATTRACTIVE lady, 45yrs, loves animals, music, socialising. If you have similar interests then call or text me. Lets meet up and spend time together. Looks unimportant, must have GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428811**

AISHA, petite Asian lady, just 23yrs, living at home but hoping to meet a sophisticated, well travelled man to teach me the ways of the world. Pls be discreet as my parents are very strict. **Text only. Box : 4003844**

TAKE a chance on me. Beryl, honest black lady. Seeking a gent 50-75 ish. who will treat me with respect. I will be respectful to you, mutual fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428809**

TABITHA, attractive well groomed lady, 32yrs, own house, good job, hoping for some naught text chat with older gent. **Text Only. Box: 4028177**

MERRY widow, 64yrs, lonely and kind. Hoping to meet a kind gent, please call, you won't be sorry, I'm good company and will care for you. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428805**

STEPHANIE, super sexy black mamma, 55yrs young with curves in all the right places. Call me and you wont be sorry, we can have the time of our lives. **Text Only. Box: 4060220**

MICHELLE, 44yrs, attractive lady, great company, hoping to meet mature gent 50+ for loving relationship. ACA/Text answered. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428803**

CANDIDA, 52yrs, married lady, very well educated with good looks and dress sense. Unappreciated by older husband and hoping for some fun with discreet chap. **Text Only. Box: 4010802**

IF you want to meet a mature busty blonde lady then look no further. Call me, I'm interested in meeting a man who wants a physical relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428799**

CHLOE, very attractive girl, 32yrs, long hair and lovely teeth, I like to take care of myself. I want a man who will pamper me. In return you wont be disappointed as I am super sexy. **Text Only. Box: 4070336**

SUSAN, articulate interesting lady, 60yrs, loves countryside and music. Hoping to meet a genuine man of any age. All calls and texts answered. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428797**

PIPPA, recently divorced lady, 46yrs, hoping to get back into dating and have some fun with a guy any age. Must be a laugh and willing to have a go at most things. **Text Only. Box: 4101590**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399**

ANGELA, attractive 66yr old free minded and spirited lady. Genuine with varied interests seeks gent 65+. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428485**

MARIA, young 54yr old, 5ft 8ins, medium build, blonde hair/brown eyes, likes swimming, walking, pubs and dining out, WLTM male 40-60 with GSOH who is honest, kind and reliable. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428609**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box 419673**

HEATHER, 54yrs, slim brunette with petite figure, loves keep fit. Seeks chap for nights out, fun times, must be honest and kind. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428491**

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JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715**

VICTORIA, 46yrs, bubbly outgoing nurse, petite pretty brunette. WLTM N/S man, any age, must have GSOH and be kind. ACA. Or text. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428489**

GENUINE lady 50yrs, independent, seeks genuine man, call to hear more about me pls. ACA/text answered. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428487**

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375**

TAMIKA, mature black beauty, hourglass figure and open minded. Pls call if you are discreet, broad minded and nice. I can travel and accommodate. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box 422365**

ANNETTA, 40yrs old seeks caring older gent 55+, you must be nice and enjoy my company. ACA/Text answered. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428483**

SAMANTHA, 35yrs, attractive brunette with own business, seeks adventurous gent for casual relationship. **Tel: 0906 515 3034 Box 425979**

TERESA, friendly lady with GSOH, curvy build and attractive looks, 50 something, seeking romantic male 45-55. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428383**

CAROLINE, 42yrs, well educated, sophisticated "some call me posh" married lady, looking for no strings midweek liaisons. **Tel: 0906 515 3026 Box 427533**

HARRIET, 42yrs, blue eyed brunette with long lets and decent curves! Looking for a cheeky adventurous man for fun only. I live alone so can accommodate and can travel. Discretion assured. ACA. Give me a try. **Tel: 0906 515 3030 Box 426205**

ARE you a gent with GSOH 60-70 and looking for some fun then call me, Leah, I'm 57yrs, slim, attractive and looking for fun. ACA. Or text me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428381**

CARMEL, open minded naughty lady seeks a broad minded strict man to unleash her wilder side. Age/looks unimportant but no time wasters please. **Tel: 0906 515 3042 Box 426851**

JANE, 52yrs genuine blue eyed blonde lady WLTM romantic gent for potential relationship. ACA/Text answered so please reply. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428379**

JOY, mid 50s independent lady, brunette, loves dining out, seeking gent of any age. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428373**

LINDA, 48yrs, young looking blonde lady, slim and attractive. Hoping to meet new men friends, call and let's see what happens. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428377**

MARGARET, attractive blonde widow, living alone and hoping to find a nice gentleman soulmate. I have lots to offer so please call or text me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428375**

ATTRACTIVE widow, loves life, 60s music, walking and fun. Hoping to meet a similar minded gent 60-80 for life's adventures. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428371**

NICOLA, 37yrs mixed race beauty, just moved to the area from London so a bit lonely. Looks unimportant must have GSOH and be kind. ACA/text answered **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428369**

WANTED, submissive gent by attractive lady 51yrs, please call if you want to know more. Ata **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428367**

THANET male, retired, 5ft5, dark hair, smart, OHOC, likes walks, travel in motorhome, looking for a single, attractive lady with similar interests in Thanet. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427557**

TALL, lively old boy, into red wine, garlic and Radio 3, seeks tactile lady for company and jolly jaunts. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 425021**

MALE, 58, slim build, 5ft9, brown eyes, hard working, enjoys fishing and socialising, looking for no stings attached fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427173**

HI ladies, looking for either NSA fun or LTR. I am single/work/live in own house. **Text only. Mailbox: 4509325**

LOCAL 70 year old young male, now single, nice appearance and dresser, looking for fun and friendship with a lady, 55-70, possible holidays. Can travel. Please ring. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426897**

LIVELY mature gent, OHAC, near sea in Folkestone, into red wine, garlic and Radio 3, seeks lady companion/lover, 58-68 yo. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422621**

CARING, sociable male, 72, N/S, likes all types of music, walking, meals out, looking for a lady for friendship at first. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426865**

MALE divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412717**

50YR old divorced white male, passionate, strong, seeking caring lady for romantic, loving relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418641**

BARRY, 50, 6ft 4ins, well built, divorced gent, looking to date calm and kind lovely lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421195**

JERRY, 66, brown hair, brown eyes, recently widowed, love to walk my dog, WLTM compatible lady for companionship and to see where things go. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426387**

LOCAL man, seeks lady for friendship possibly more, for romantic dates and good times together, hope to hear from you. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426195**

SIX foot guy, mature, looking for someone special to spend some quality time with. Please leave me a message I would love to hear from you! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420163**

ALE, 70s, would like to meet slim lady 60 plus. **Text only. Mailbox: 4505135**

Men Seeking

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MALE, modern dresser, likes driving to the coast and different places, looking for someone 60-70, possibly who can drive same as me, just to go out and enjoy life and have a laugh. It would be nice to have someone on my arm and to bring flowers to. Call me and let's have a chat. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428771**

RICHARD, 55, looking for lady for outings, meals out, pubs etc. New to area and lonely. East Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428631**

NICE looking male, 55, seeks mature female for fun, outings and friendship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 334975**

MALE, 42, married and bored, looking for adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428599**

SMART Thanet male, 70, dark hair, brown eyes, 5ft5, OHOC, likes travel, countryside, the sea, walking, looking for an attractive local lady, for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428303**

MALE, 55, WLTM a lady, 60-70, for discreet adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428039**

ATTRACTIVE male, dark hair, brown eyes, 5ft5, solvent, own bungalow and car, likes travel, countryside, seaside, walking, looking for attractive local lady for LTR. Thanet. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428127**

GENUINE retired, mature widower, honest, kind and considerate, enjoys most things, walking, countryside, seaside, seeking a lady for LTR, just wanting to share my life with somebody special. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428023**

SOLVENT male, older but young at heart, looking for a young lady to wine and dine and spoil and pamper and in turn to pamper me. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427443**

SINGLE dad of two, WLTM a single mum, for a proper relationship. Please get in contact I look forward to hearing from you. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427999**

WELL off man, wanting a young lady for spoiling. I am a sugar daddy looking for a sugar baby. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 427441**

JAMES, 43, genuine, witty, positive, kind and caring, loves travel, socialising, eating out and lots and lots of laughs with the right person, looking for genuine, friendly lady. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 428019**

MALE 60, 6ft, blue eyes, broad shoulders, size 11 shoes, a real handful! Seeks a fit mature busty woman for fun times. **Text only replies. Mailbox: 6001755**

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KENT man, retired engineer, solvent, enjoys holidays, meals out, good conversation, WLTM a slim lady, 60-70, with a GSOH, to share these times and hopefully become friends. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426887**

RETIRED, smart, 68 year old, 5ft5, I enjoy eating out, walking, holidays and golf, WLTM a slim, attractive lady, 60-68, for a loving, tender relationship, to enjoy these times with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421853**

GUY, 50, 6ft tall, calm and kind, good company, seeking lovely lady for good times and fun and loving. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 425369**

HANDSOME male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587**

MALE, 6ft, brown hair and blue eyes, warm and understanding, likes dining out and cosy nights in, lots of fun, friendship and holidays. Looking for a lady over 48. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 426057**

CARING sociable, GSOH, slim, attractive, married gent, 67, feels discarded and lonely, seeks likewise lady 60+ for trips out, dining etc, **Text only. Mailbox: 5082918**

Gay Seeking

Join our Gay online service **FREE** visit: **localgaydate.co.uk**

MALE, 50s, likes to cross dress, looking for same for friendship and fun. Has to be discreet. **Text only Replies. Mailbox: 4623598**

JOHN, young at heart 65, bi male, looking for casual fun with likeminded male. Maidstone Kent area. Must be discreet. **Text only replies. Mailbox: 5657306**

GAY guy, medium build, likes outdoors, DIY, seeking slim, N/S guy for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 403267**

EASY going guy, 68, likes walks, books, seeks N/S guy for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411413**

ROBBIE, 54, reasonably fit, bi-curious, I'm very inexperienced and would like to meet a CD or TV preferably but not essential for a bit of fun. Kent area. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421357**

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

Not such a fond farewell to CEO

SO the CEO of EKHUFT (East KENT Hospitals University Foundation Trust) Matthew Kershaw has 'jumped ship' then [KoS, last week]. So much for dedication.

I am a member of EKHUFT (anyone can join), and have received notification of his resignation, accompanied with loads of corporate jargon about how good he is, or rather was, at his job.

Well, we here in Thanet haven't noticed any changes to improve the plight that so many Thanet people have to endure having to go to the William Harvey at Ashford or the Kent & Canterbury for services which were once available at the QEQM in Margate.

I do not know of anywhere else where so many people have to travel so far afield to access the services to which we have a right. The result is, it costs Thanet people more money for their NHS - and this is in a recognised deprived area.

In Mr Kershaw's message of departure, he says about "improving internal culture as a place to work". Oh really? We now have staff parking all along the road rather than pay the increased parking charges for staff.

So, Mr Kershaw, thanks for nothing!

Betty Renz,
Margate

Health chiefs are a waste of money

WHAT sense is there in Matthew Kershaw quitting his job with the east Kent hospital trust that has not been successful and going to another health think tank? It is a contemptable misuse of taxpayers' money.

Also, if the deputy chief executive is taking over why recruit someone else? Are they not good enough to do it?

No wonder doctors and nurses are leaving all the time. We have too many over-paid bureaucrats in the health service.

E Pettinger,
Hythe

Nuke them? Have a little think

I WAS gravely concerned over Peter Booth's letter in last week's KoS.

A moment's reflection on the implications of his suggestion will only lead to the realisation of two possible outcomes of 'nuking' North Korea.

Even if there is no response following a decisive first strike, a fallout cloud will drift over the region. Many innocent people, beyond those immediately killed, will suffer after-effects. Remember Chernobyl in 1986?

Hitting the Chinese islands Mr Booth mentions may drag a nuclear-armed superpower into a response which could, conceivably, escalate from a tactical, regional nuclear conflict into - potentially - becoming a strategic global one. Nuclear winter anyone?

Diplomacy is the far better option, more so when nuclear powers are involved. As Churchill said, at the White House, in 1954: "To jaw-jaw always is better than to war-war".

Malcolm Smith,
Dover

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Just what's happening to Tunbridge Wells?

WHATEVER is becoming of Tunbridge Wells?

Firstly, the Royal Victoria Place shopping centre is set to undergo a major 'upgrade' which will purportedly attract many more visitors to the town – causing yet more traffic congestion on the roads leading to, and in, the town centre.

Secondly, the majority of 'Conservative' councillors appear to have taken leave of what they need to conserve, by supporting council leader David Jukes' ludicrous proposal to bulldoze over part of the Calverley Grounds in order to erect a costly and hideous-looking civic complex whilst others simultaneously and misguidedly protest at the absence of any activity on the site of the old cinema in Mount Pleasant.

Not only has the upgrade to RVP lost us some outlets in the food court, but it now threatens the future of other sole-traders,

Leaving aside one's scepticism about whether it will be a success in attracting more shoppers to the town, one cannot help wondering how much income has been lost from shops and cafes which have had to close as a result of it.

Insofar as the proposed civic complex is concerned, it is not very often I agree with the Liberal Democrats, but I support councillor Ben Chapelard's call for a borough-wide referendum to decide whether or not the proposed civic complex should be erected; not least as we all know the financial cost of any new-build public sector development is always grossly under-estimated, leaving aside the untold damage it would do to the Calverley Grounds.

Finally, let's have done with all calls to build on the old cinema site and convert it into a landscaped garden which can be enjoyed by all and not just greedy property developers anxious to erect another eyesore to line their own pockets.

Christopher Luke
Tunbridge Wells

We must speak out over racism

WE were pleased reading your newspaper recently [KoS, 10.09] that a Conservative MP [Maidstone's Helen Grant] has condemned extreme racism.

After the tragic death last year of Jo Cox by a racist and the current hatred shown by many people, this is helpful. We are well aware in our own town that a Kosovan refugee friend's daughter was consistently beaten up as she was a foreigner.

When we lived in Southend on Sea many years ago there was a non-party secular organisation called International Friendship. I would like to see a similar organisation in Kent.

Would other people be interested in forming such an organisation?

We should not stand by and watch racism without trying to do anything about it.

The result can be, as many people saw before Hitler came to power, that doing nothing led to the slippery slope of around six million Jews as well as the Roma and people with learning difficulties being killed.

David and Anthea Spurling,
Sittingbourne

MP Gale is far from balanced

MP Sir Roger Gale is very critical of Kent County Council's decision to postpone presentations concerning the future of Manston Airport [KoS, last week].

Surely, the council is only being logical, balanced and proportionate, in waiting to hear both completing development presentations at the same time?

What is Sir Roger's problem with that? Furthermore, why is he so fixated on only supporting RiverOak's proposal? If he really believes the site's future is as a commercial airport, why not give equal backing, promotion and publicity to the other investors with plans to bring that about?

P Hendy,
Herne Bay

Export protestors are growing

SO S Watson believes that protesters against live animal exports are narrow minded? [KoS, last week].

Would he have said the same about those who opposed slavery and forcing children, as young as four, to work down the mines and factories as it was thought necessary for the economy?

He is quite wrong that live animal exports is an issue few people really care about. The number of our supporters has been increasing rapidly at the Ramsgate protests, with new people joining all the time. Everyone I have spoken to hates this vile trade and wants it to end.

And referring to the article on the forecast by MEP, Keith Taylor, that when we leave the EU we will be governed by World Trade Organisation rules, our government will be urged to show this body the strong public opposition to live animal exports.

Vivien Clifford,
Ramsgate

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available widely across Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.

images of kent

Young fox

by **Dennis Jackson from Cliftonville**

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Friday 10 November, 2017 • Quote: CP11-1-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for an early taste of Christmas - for over 40s only - as we rock the weekend away to the sounds of the 60s. Our brilliant entertainment programmes feature top 60s bands and tribute acts including Marty Wilde and the Wildcats, Union Gap UK, The New Honeycombs, Dave Grant of Paper Lace and The Beatle (John Lennon tribute). Enjoy non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and half-price drinks at this rockin' party weekend.

INCLUDED: Half Price bar drinks - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers - lunch times and evenings from Friday night to Sunday night • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet (bed linen and towels included) - club upgrade available • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Free parking

Sounds of the 60s Christmas Party

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Warner Norton Grange, Isle of Wight

24 November, 2017 • Quote CN11-KOS

Great Entertainment, a fab festive atmosphere, Free drinks, good food, comfortable centrally-heated chalets, free car ferry and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, on the Isle of Wight, our most popular Christmas Party venue. We've got a great entertainment line-up with 60s band Union Gap, The New Honeycombs, The New All Stars featuring Keith Slater PLUS our traditional Team Panto and much more.

INCLUDED: Free drinks 6pm to midnight every night - selected branded beers and spirits, house wine by the glass, selected soft drinks and mixers • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - upgrades available • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Free car ferry • Free parking

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Bosworth Hall Hotel, Leicestershire

Friday 26 January, 2018 • Quote: BH1-KOS

Extend your New Year celebrations at Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. Our popular private party weekends have become a must-do annual event with guests returning year after year. The full entertainment programme features 60s band The Berries, Mr Magoo 60s Experience, Mike Leigh as Neil Diamond PLUS Vicki Lambert as Dusty Springfield. Add to this 2-for-1 drinks both nights and this is one party that's set to rock.

INCLUDED: 2 drinks for the price of 1 from 7pm to 11pm both nights • 2 nights sharing an en-suite twin or double bedroom • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • Entertainment each evening • Leisure facilities (indoor pool & gym) • Free parking

Swinging 60s to Dirty Dancing Summer Party

3 nights half board PLUS from £159pp

Pontins Pakefield, Suffolk Coast

PONTINS

Friday 29 June, 2018 • Quote SP6-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for the ultimate feel good Summer Party - for over 40s only. We will take you back in time for a fun filled, entertainment packed weekend, including Hermans Hermits, Marmalade, The Rag Dolls, Rob Dee as Billy Fury, a Dirty Dancing Tribute Show PLUS house band Sounds Imperial. You'll also enjoy half-price drinks all weekend.

INCLUDED: Half-price drinks all weekend - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers lunch times & evenings from Friday night to Sunday night • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet - club upgrade available • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Free car parking

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POPULAR: Citroen's C3 Aircross compact crossover can now be ordered ahead of arriving in showrooms on November 1.

Citroen launches its SUV offensive with C3 Aircross

WITH sport utility vehicles the current transport of delight for many motorists, Citroen's SUV offensive kicks off with the new C3 Aircross, getting its world premiere at Frankfurt Motor Show.

The compact crossover, replacing the C3 Picasso multi-purpose vehicle, is available to order from £13,995 to £19,720 on the road, arriving in showrooms on November 1.

Citroen sees the C3 Aircross shaking up the increasingly-popular, supermini-sized B-SUV segment with its highly-customisable character – 85 personalisation combinations – and distinctive SUV design with raised ground clearance, elevated driving position, front and rear skid plates, large wheels and wheel arch extensions.

It also introduces new technologies to the Citroen range including wireless smartphone charging and an enhanced Grip Control with hill-descent assist traction system reducing the risk of slipping or speeding up going down steep inclines. There are up to 12 driving aids including voice-controlled 3D navigation, keyless entry and ignition, reversing camera, lane departure warning and blind-spot monitoring.

The passenger compartment was designed with Citroen's expertise in on-board space, modularity and light coming in the cabin, so it features the space and modularity of a people carrier.

The C3 Aircross offers best-in-class space with generous legroom and a 410-litre boot, rising to 520 litres with the 60/40 split sliding rear bench option on range-topping Flair trim.

Available in Touch, Feel and Flair, power comes from 82hp and turbo 110 and 130hp 1.2-litre PureTech petrol and 100 and 120hp 1.6-litre BlueHDi diesel engines. The 110hp petrol engine is also offered with the latest-generation automatic gearbox.

C3 Aircross also features coloured light surrounds, door mirrors, wheel centre caps, rear quarter windows and roof bars.

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Desirable supermini is Swift and sure

Andy Russell is pleasantly surprised by the all-new Suzuki Swift supermini - a very competent, attractive all-round package with a real fun factor to drive

DRIVING different cars can be like opening a present. Some big, exciting ones are more packaging than present, some small ones an enjoyable surprise. The new Suzuki Swift is the latter.

It takes the Swift DNA and styling to a new level, so looks more grown up, but is actually 10mm shorter, 15mm lower but 40mm wider, giving a low, squat stance.

There are two petrol engines – four-cylinder 90PS naturally-aspirated 1.2-litre Dualjet and three-cylinder 111PS 1.0-litre turbo Boosterjet – both with mild hybrid systems in range-topping SZ5.

Called SVHS (Smart Hybrid Vehicle by Suzuki), a belt-driven integrated starter generator boosts the engine when accelerating and restarts it after idle stop with stored electricity generated when braking and slowing.

The 1.0 Boosterjet SVHS is a peach – flexible low down, picking up strongly from 2,000rpm, revving freely and returned 55mpg to 60mpg overall.

Using Suzuki's new platform, the Swift rides well, with wheels pushed out to the corners maximising its footprint on the road, but thumps over big bumps and potholes, more noticeable in the back. Agile on twisty roads, with good steering feel and plenty of grip, there's just enough body movement to be entertaining, not alarming.

Behind the wheel it all works well – sensible switches, a user-friendly touchscreen – and looks pleasant, particularly the rotary heating and ventilation controls which also contain the settings display.

Entry-level 1.2 SZ3 includes six airbags, air-con, privacy glass, DAB with Bluetooth, LED daytime running lights and front electric windows. The 1.0 SZ-T adds rear-view camera, smartphone link display audio, 16in alloy wheels and front fog lamps.

SZ5, with both engines and a 1.0 automatic and 1.2 all-wheel drive, has auto air-con, polished alloys, sat-nav, forward detection system with autonomous braking, lane departure warning, auto high beam and adaptive cruise control, keyless entry and ignition, electric back windows and LED headlamps and tail lights. Suzuki's new Swift makes huge advances - it also drives well, is spacious and a well-equipped, value package you can't ignore.

Suzuki Swift

Price:	from £14,499
Engine tested:	998cc, 111PS, three-cylinder turbo petrol
Performance:	0-62mph 10.6 seconds; top speed 121mph
MPG:	Urban 58.8; extra urban 70.6; combined 65.7
CO2 emissions:	97g/km

C-HR Icon 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2T VVT-i Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 38.1 (7.4), Extra Urban 55.4 (5.1), Combined 47.8 (5.9). CO2 Emissions 135g/km. All mpg and CO2 figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated laboratory test results. These are provided to allow comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

*Model shown is C-HR Icon 5 door Coupe FWD 1.2 VVT-i Manual at £695 Advance Payment. Subject to availability. Available as part of the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. Please note that a total of 60,000 miles over three years are allowed on the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. Offer valid between 1st July and 30th September 2017.

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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

highways england

M20 MOTORWAY (ASHFORD TO FOLKESTONE) TEMPORARY TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS

Notice is hereby given that Highways England Company Limited has made an Order on the M20 Motorway in the County of Kent, under Section 14(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 because works are proposed to be executed on the road.

The effect of the Order would be to:

1. authorise the overnight closure of both carriageways of the M20 between Junction 10 (A20/A292/A2070) and Junction 11 (A20/B2068) and all of the slip roads leading to and from these lengths of carriageways; and
2. impose a 50 mph speed limit on the coast-bound carriageway of the M20 between the centreline of Cradle Bridge underbridge and a point 200m east of Ashford Road (A20) underbridge and all of the slip roads leading to and from this length of carriageway; and
3. impose a 50 mph speed limit on the London-bound carriageway of the M20 between the centreline of Saltwood Overbridge and centreline of Stock Lane overbridge and all of the slip roads leading to and from this length of carriageway.

These measures would be in the interests of road safety while contractors undertake carriageway works and all associated works.

It is expected that the work would last for approximately 2 weeks starting on or after Monday 2nd October 2017. The overnight closures would take place between 20:00 and 06:00 (maximum period).

The Order would come into force on 30 September 2017 and have a maximum duration of eighteen months.

Traffic affected by the closures would be diverted using the A20. Heavy Goods Vehicles and vehicles with a height over 4.7 metres would be directed to use the A20, A259, A261, and A2070.

The temporary closures, speed limits and diversion routes would be clearly indicated by traffic signs when they are in operation during the works period.

M Taylor, an Official of Highways England Co Ltd.
Ref: HE/SE/2017/M20/167

Highways England Company Limited, (Company No. 9346363). Registered Office: Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 4LZ. A company registered in England and Wales.

For enquiries, please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5000 or info@highwaysengland.co.uk
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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

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Annual General Meeting

Thursday 28 September 2017

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, who provide mental health and a range of other services to the people of Kent and Medway, will be holding it's AGM at Trust headquarters:

Farm Villa, Hermitage Lane,
Maidstone, Kent ME16 9PH.
2pm – 3.30pm

The meeting will include a review of the past year, current focus and a financial report.

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Stevens: We must not slip up again

All-rounder identifies missed opportunities as season ends

Cricket

By Mark Pennell
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

DARREN Stevens says Kent will need to brush up on their slip fielding skills during the close season if they are to successfully pursue the county's ambition of sealing championship promotion next season.

The county side got off to a flying start this season in their pursuit of a Division One spot, but go into Monday's final championship game against Glamorgan at Canterbury knowing their dip in form has cost them.

The mood was matched during the rain-affected clash with Derbyshire this week which saw no play at all.

But the veteran all-rounder says too many chances have gone to ground in the cordon this summer and that missed opportunities have cost the county dearly in recent match situations at Chester-le-Street and Bristol.

The star explained: "We had got into a great position against Gloucestershire when a catch went down, which was very costly.

"The Gloucestershire lads then batted well on a docile pitch. But it was disappointing for us, having fought back so well from their brilliant start with that big opening stand.

"Then, last week, we also had Durham in trouble and dropped a catch.

"If we don't go up this year it is something we will be looking at during the winter and trying to get better at."

Head coach Matt Walker's disappointment was apparent.

He explained: "We are not going to get promoted and that was what we set out to achieve at the start of the season.

"To win a division or win promotion you have to be good from start to finish and we have probably just fallen short on too many occasions."

Meanwhile, pace bowler James Harris has thanked Kent for his time at the club this summer and a loan stint that proved to be the springboard for a return to the Middlesex side.

The popular 27-year-old Welshman took 19 wickets at 21 apiece during his four championship appearances and also averaged 36.5 with the bat before his recall to Middlesex.

He said: "I really enjoyed my loan at Kent. They're a great bunch of people; the office staff, the coaches and the players, and I'm very grateful to them for my time here."

DISAPPOINTED: Darren Stevens had hoped to see the club reach Division One this year but a dip in form cost them dear Pictures: ADY KERRY

Gills set to face Dack in Ewood Park expedition

Football

GILLINGHAM could come face-to-face with former favourite Bradley Dack next week as Ady Pennock's men make the long trek to Blackburn Rovers hoping to build on the win against Charlton last Saturday.

The Gills were away in Rochdale this weekend hoping to make it two wins on the bounce, but many fans will be eagerly anticipating the chance to see Dack line up against them at Ewood Park.

Dack quit the Gills in the summer, signing a £750,000 three-year deal with the former Premier League champions. But so far he has been dogged by injuries which have kept recent appearances limited to coming off the bench.

DACK: Will he start for new side against the Gills next weekend?

The game is likely to grow in significance for Pennock, however, as he knows only a strong run of wins now will prevent the calls for his head intensifying. Before that, however, they have a home game with Scunthorpe on Tuesday.

But last week's win has certainly boosted the Gills. Tom Eaves' goal in the 54th minute, against the run of play, was enough to dent the Addicks' push for a play-off place and secure the Gills' first win of the season.

Speaking after the win, goalscorer Eaves said: "It's very uplifting, the morale in the changing room is better than ever.

"We needed the three points, I think everybody felt that and it means a lot to all of us. We couldn't have put more into it, we gave absolutely everything and the whole team is delighted.

"Once you hear the fans getting behind you and have a wave of attack it gives you another gear."

Sport Shorts

» editorial@kosmedia.co.uk or call Tom Pyman 01233 653477

Tasty FA Cup qualifier derby in bid for glory

MARGATE will host Herne Bay in a mouthwatering local derby FA Cup clash next weekend.

The third qualifying round game will give the winner a golden opportunity of potentially securing a money-spinning first round proper tie against league opposition.

Herne Bay will make the short trip along the north Kent coast to Hartsdown Park next Saturday hoping to spring a shock against their higher league opponents.

Both will be only too aware a win secures a £7,000 prize fund.

Elsewhere, Neil Cugley's Folkestone Invicta will be hoping home advantage will benefit them against Aylesbury United,

Dartford face a potentially tricky away trip to Suffolk side Needham Market. All games kick-off at 3pm.

Winners of the tie will reach the fourth, and final, qualifying round, which will see the introduction of a number of other senior non-league sides, before the league clubs are introduced for the first round proper.

GLORY: Cup anticipation

WIN: His departure comes just days after scoring vital winner on Sunday

Blow as Mos captain quits after just 4 games

INVICTA Dynamos club captain Bobby Chamberlain scored his first goal in helping the Medway side clinch a victory over the Swindon Wildcats last Sunday - and then confirmed this week he was quitting the club.

The forward has been offered a position at his family's business in Hull and will hand over the skipper's armband to defenceman Arran Strawson.

He had played just four times for the Mos have joined in the summer.

Head coach Kevin Parrish said: "Obviously we are very disappointed both to be losing Bobby and at the time of his departure given the success we enjoyed at the weekend.

"As a club we will look to replace him as soon as suitable options can be found."

Plant tees off life on pro circuit

ALFIE Plant took his first steps into the career of professional golfer on Thursday when he teed off in the Portgual Masters.

The 25-year-old from Dartford dazzled at the Open at Royal Birkdale, picking up the silver medal as highest placed amateur.

Following the Walker Cup earlier this month, he's now turned pro and received an invitation to take part in the tournament, staged in Vilamour, which carries a £1.7 million prize fund pot. The star-studded event got under way on Thursday and concludes today (Sunday).

However, he was struggling to ensure he made the cut by the end of the first day, carding a three over round.

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